

**Minutes of a meeting of Scrutiny Committee for Community,
Customer Services and Service Delivery
held on Wednesday, 18th September, 2019
from 7.00 - 7.54 pm**

Present: A Boutrup (Chair)
Anthea Lea (Vice-Chair)

L Bennett
P Chapman
R Clarke
S Ellis

I Gibson
J Henwood
T Hussain
J Mockford

M Pulfer
A Sparasci
D Sweatman

Absent: Councillors B Dempsey and S Smith

Also Present Councillors N Webster, J Belsey and R De Mierre.
(Cabinet Members):

**1 TO NOTE SUBSTITUTES IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE
RULE 4 -SUBSTITUTES AT MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES ETC.**

Councillor Coe-Gunnell White substituted for Councillor Smith.

2 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were received from Councillors Dempsey and Smith.

**3 TO RECEIVE DECLARATION OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS IN RESPECT OF
ANY MATTER ON THE AGENDA.**

No declarations were received.

**4 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON
10 JULY 2019**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 10 July 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**5 TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN AGREES TO TAKE AS
URGENT BUSINESS.**

None.

6 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW FOR SAYERS COMMON

Tom Clark, Head of Regulatory Services, introduced the report for the Community Governance Review (CGR) for Sayers Common which set out the arrangements of the CGR and sought approval for the proposed Terms of Reference. The Council

was petitioned by residents of Sayers Common Ward to conduct a CGR, however he noted that the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) have expressed their interest in conducting an electoral review of the Mid Sussex District Council which they intend to start in 2020. He said that it would not be sensible to conduct two reviews at the same time and suggested that the CGR review be postponed until the LGBC make a decision on whether to include the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Community Governance Review in their review.

RESOLVED

The Scrutiny Committee resolved to postpone the Community Governance Review for Sayers Common pending the Local Government Boundary Commission's decision on whether to include their review.

7 DRAFT ANIMAL WELFARE POLICY

Paul Thornton, Senior Licencing Officer, introduced the report which sought the Committee's views on the content of the Draft Animal Welfare Policy under the 'The Animal Welfare Regulations' (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 before it goes out to public consultation in September 2019. He highlighted that the legislation provides a single licensing regime for animal licensing activities but noted that the legislation does not cover horse livery yards, zoos or dangerous wild animals.

A Member enquired how individuals that accept dogs for boarding are identified.

The Senior Licencing Officer explained that a lot of consultation has taken place with current licence holders and Defra has conducted an extensive advertising campaign which has resulted in more people becoming aware of the need to be licenced.

A Member enquired why livery stables are excluded under the legislation as there are horse welfare implications in the business. He also noted that farrier expertise is not mentioned in the policy.

The Senior Licencing Officer confirmed that the licensable activities are set within the legislation and the yards that are licenced are those which hire out horses. He added that the Government are not likely to licence those yards in the future. With respect to farriers, he stated that he would add them to the list of consultees.

The Chairman noted a slight typographical error on the first paragraph of P.27 in which it should remove the reference to 'cats' and state 'accommodation for other people's dogs' as the legislation is only relevant to dogs.

The Cabinet Member for Customer Services questioned how long the licences run for.

The Senior Licencing Officer clarified that licences can run for 1, 2 or 3 years depending on the licencing matrix and what inspection standards they meet.

A Member noted Item 7.3 of the Appendix and sought clarifications as to whether the fees for the application are refunded to the applicant.

The Senior Licencing Officer confirmed that the legislation allows the Council to reimburse the applicant should someone be unsuccessful however he highlighted that only the grant element of the application is reimbursed.

The Chairman queried why horse veterinarians are on the list and standard vets are not.

The Senior Licencing Officer explained that they are on the list by convention and that it represents the speciality of being a horse surgeon.

The Chairman took the committee to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

The Committee resolved to endorse the Draft policy at Appendix 1 for public consultation pending the correction of one minor typographical error to the first paragraph of P.27.

8 PROPOSAL FOR AN ENHANCED RECYCLING COLLECTION SERVICE FOR TEXTILES AND SMALL WASTE ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

Rob Anderton, Divisional Leader for Commercial Services and Contracts, introduced the report which sought to continue the progression of a kerbside collection service provided through the Council's existing waste and recycling collection contractor, for recycling and to introduce a collection of textiles and small WEEE, for resale in partnership with a charity. The development of an increased network of bring banks was also explored following a report to Scrutiny on 23 January 2019 however this was not favoured.

A Member enquired whether there was anything the Council could, or should do to encourage businesses to have green banks on their land.

The Divisional Leader for Commercial Services and Contracts explained that textiles carry a value, and there is therefore already an incentive for local businesses to provide bins on their land.

A Member sought reassurances that the retrofitting of the freighters will not impact on the day-to-day operation of the core waste and recycling services.

The Divisional Leader for Commercial Services and Contracts confirmed that due to the nature of the business of the freighters they are serviced regularly and can be retrofitted easily when off the road for routine maintenance.

A Member sought clarification on whether the charitable partners would leave any items if they deem it to be worthless.

The Divisional Leader for Commercial Services and Contracts clarified that there is a system in place to ensure that items that are not collectable or sellable are recycled.

A Member enquired whether small batteries can be collected.

The Divisional Leader for Commercial Services and Contracts confirmed that collections of batteries are part of the waste collection service the proposal provides.

A Member questioned whether the proposed food waste collection would impede on this project.

The Chairman explained that it is a standalone project and will not be affected by possible food waste collection. The Chairman then took the committee to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

The Committee recommend to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Service Delivery:

- a) The progression of a kerbside collection service provided through the Council's existing waste and recycling collection contractor, for recycling;
- b) The introduction of a collection of textiles and small WEEE, for resale in partnership with a charity.

9 LEISURE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT – ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2018-19

Rob Anderton, Divisional Leader for Commercial Services and Contracts, introduced the report which sought to provide the Scrutiny Committee with an annual update of the Leisure Management contract operated on behalf of the Council by Places Leisure for the period April 2018 – March 2019. It outlined high customer satisfaction rates and increased attendance levels.

A Member noted the new Pure Gym soon to open in Burgess Hill and queried what the Council is doing to prepare for the financial impact arising from the introduction of a new competitor.

The Divisional Leader for Commercial Services and Contracts explained that the Council has been exploring the potential implications of the opening of a new gym and Places Leisure has experienced this in a number of their other contracts nationwide. He assured the Member that there are financial guarantees to ensure the Council still receives its income.

A Member questioned whether the Council has a statutory obligation to provide such leisure facilities.

The Divisional Leader for Commercial Services and Contracts outlined that whilst leisure is not a statutory provision, the Council does have a responsibility for the health and wellbeing of its residents which the fitness elements of leisure centres cater for.

Judy Holmes, Assistant Chief Executive, added that the Council's leisure centres provide discretionary services to some groups and offers services that the private market may not choose to deliver.

A Member sought clarification on who decides the recipients of concessions.

The Divisional Leader for Commercial Services and Contracts clarified that, when letting the contract, the Council set the parameters around the provision of concessions.

The Assistant Chief Executive outlined that it is good practice to monitor the contract to ensure that it is agile and the Council can request to make changes to the contract should it be felt appropriate.

A Member enquired whether there are any further improvements planned at the Kings Centre, East Grinstead.

The Divisional Leader for Commercial Services and Contracts explained that the Council is currently working with Places Leisure to consider options for the provision of new facilities at the centre, not only to diversify the leisure offer but to address the challenges of local competition.

A Member questioned whether the leisure centres could become more dementia friendly.

The Divisional Leader for Commercial Services and Contracts confirmed it is something that is regularly discussed with Places Leisure; and work is ongoing to ensure they are accommodating customers with disabilities, including dementia and visual impairments.

The Cabinet Member for Customer Services noted that a representative from the Dementia Friendly Town walked around the leisure centres recently to assess and advise on how to make the leisure centres more accommodating.

The Chairman then took the committee to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

10 LANDSCAPES CONTRACTS - ANNUAL REVIEW FOR 2018-19

Rob Anderton, Divisional Leader for Commercial Services and Contracts, introduced the report which provided an annual review (for the period April 2018 - March 2019) of the Grounds Maintenance Contract operated by idVerde and the Arboriculture Contract operated by County Tree Surgeons. He noted that 3 parks achieved the Green Flag in 2019 and a further, fourth application will be sought in 2020 for Victoria Park, Haywards Heath.

The Chairman noted that there is no mention of further investment to Victoria Park.

The Divisional Leader for Commercial Services and Contracts confirmed that Victoria Park is subject to a master planning exercise this year with the investment scheduled for next year. He added that the Council is confident that Victoria Park is already a high quality facility, and can achieve the Green Flag award.

A Member enquired whether there are any projects for tree planting as she noted that Marle Place, Burgess Hill could benefit from planting. She also questioned whether it would be possible to apply to the Council to plant trees in certain areas.

The Divisional Leader for Commercial Services and Contracts explained that there is no additional funding for tree planting, only for replacing any diseased or damaged trees that are removed. He highlighted the need for considerable aftercare when tree planting is carried out correctly.

A Member noted that the Council is now mapping all of the trees within the District and questioned whether there is mapping for memory trees.

The Chairman confirmed that the maintenance and mapping is for all trees within the District.

A Member sought further information on the details of the accident regime.

The Divisional Leader for Commercial Services and Contracts clarified that near misses have been reported as potential accidents so the contractor can manage future potential incidents better. He added that most accidents have been minor with the exception of one major accident which was due to wasp stings that resulted in the individual taking a number of days off.

A Member sought clarification on the cutting regime of the District football pitches as she receives comments from residents stating that the grass is too long.

The Divisional Leader for Commercial Services and Contracts explained that the football pitches are given a defined number of cuts per year which is based upon the expected weather over particular months; sometimes supplementary cuts are required due to the changes in the climate.

A Member questioned who is responsible for cutting the grass on a pathway.

The Divisional Leader for Commercial Services and Contracts explained that Mid Sussex are responsible for Council owned parks and some parish/town councils have responsibility for open spaces and parks in their area. Pathways and grass verges are generally the responsibility of West Sussex County Council as the Highway Authority.

A Member asked how the football pitches that require attention are prioritised.

The Divisional Leader for Commercial Services and Contracts confirmed that the current approach is predominantly reactive, dealing with requests for works as they arise. However, the Council has recently commissioned a Playing Pitch Strategy, which has used a combination of club surveys, user surveys and site visits to assess the quality of the pitches. When adopted, this strategy will be used to inform a prioritised work programme.

The Chairman took the committee to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

11 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNITY, CUSTOMER SERVICES & SERVICE DELIVERY WORK PROGRAMME

Tom Clark, Head of Regulatory Services, introduced the report which provided an overview of the forthcoming business of the committee. He noted the items scheduled for the November meeting and noted that the Chairman is content with receiving a report on building control and the safety of buildings in February 2020. He highlighted that further discussion is needed with the County Council to bring forward the report on food and absorbent waste with the potential need for a separate meeting to discuss the item.

The Chairman took the committee to the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

The Committee noted the Committee's Work Programme as set out at paragraph 5 of the report.

12 QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10 DUE NOTICE OF WHICH HAS BEEN GIVEN.

The meeting finished at 7.54 pm

Chairman