

**Minutes of a meeting of Scrutiny Committee for Community,
Customer Services and Service Delivery
held on Wednesday, 5th February, 2020
from 7.00 - 8.02 pm**

Present:

Anthea Lea (Vice-Chair)

L Bennett
M Belsey
A Bennett
P Chapman
R Clarke

J Dabell
B Dempsey
S Ellis
I Gibson
J Henwood

T Hussain
J Mockford
S Smith
D Sweatman

Absent:

Councillors A Boutrup, M Pulfer and A Sparasci

**Also Present
as Cabinet
Members:**

Councillors R de Mierre, S Hillier and N Webster

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

In the absence of Councillor Boutrup, the Vice Chairman Councillor Anthea Lea took her place as Chairman for this meeting. With the agreement of Committee Members, Councillor Ellis acted as Vice Chairman.

Councillor Dabell substituted for Councillor Pulfer. Councillor M Belsey substituted for Cllr Boutrup, Councillor A Bennett substituted for Councillor Sparasci.

2 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were received from Councillors Pulfer, Boutrup and Sparasci.

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

None.

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

None.

5 OVERVIEW OF COMPLAINTS – 2018/2019

Mat Jarman, Business Unit Leader for Customer Services and Communications introduced the Complaints Annual Report. He noted an increase in compliments and a decrease in complaints received during the year. Member's attention was drawn to paragraph 14 which explained why there was a difference in the number of complaints and enquiries received and determined, as some complaints are dealt with outside of the reporting year.

The Cabinet Member for Customer Services welcomed the report. As there were no questions from Members, the Chairman took Members to the recommendation which was agreed.

RESOLVED

Scrutiny Committee for Community, Customer Services and Service Delivery noted the report.

6 AIR QUALITY

The Chairman began by thanking Officers for the training provided on Air Quality on 4 February. This was reiterated by those Members who attended.

Adam Dracott, Team Leader for Environmental Protection introduced the report. It is based on information provided to the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and was approved by them in August 2019. The Council currently has 33 monitoring sites which show a gradual decrease in pollution from nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), and one Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) around part of the Stonepound Crossroads in Hassocks.

Members discussed the issues of particulate matter and short-term exposure to nitrogen dioxide around routes to schools. The Team Leader for Environmental Protection confirmed that current modelling does not register levels sufficient to trigger problematic short-term exposure levels. The Council is part of the Sussex Air Quality Partnership which secured funding from DEFRA to work with schools on an anti-idling project. Alongside this, there is work underway on school travel plans to encourage a modal shift from car travel to walking.

Discussion was held on the AQMA at Stonepound Crossroads and it was noted that continual improvements to the vehicle fleet was a contributing factor to the downward trend of NO₂ in the area. A Member queried the potential to amend the report to reflect different KPI's and key actions to mitigate the air quality issues. There is limited scope to amend the content of the report as items are prescribed by DEFRA, however Members were encouraged to put suggestions through the Air Quality Steering Group for the AQMA at Hassocks for consideration.

Members discussed the funding potential for more sophisticated monitoring stations in the major towns across the District, as well as other steps that the Council can take to improve air quality. The Head of Digital and Customer Service confirmed that the next revision of the Council's Sustainability Strategy was in development to look at wider Council aspiration. It was also noted that a real-time air quality monitoring station was being proposed in the Service Plans for 2020/21, which if successful could be rolled out in appropriate areas.

The topic of wood burning stoves and bonfires was discussed and it was confirmed that the Sussex Air Quality Partnership has carried out a promotional campaign to

raise awareness of the issue of domestic solid fuel burning and is in the process of analysing survey responses on this subject, as well as promoting cleaner fuel options and upgrading appliances.

A Member raised the subject of funding for cycling route improvements around Hassocks and it was agreed that the Team Leader for Environmental Protection will provide a written response to Members following the meeting

The Cabinet Member for Community concluded by noting that the monitoring sites across the District record NO2 levels significantly below the national average and that the Council continues to work with West Sussex County Council and the Sussex Air Quality Partnership to mitigate against the impact of traffic and other factors on air quality. Examples of 'Cut your Engine' signage commissioned by the Council were also displayed to Members and these will be rolled out for a short time in a variety of locations to encourage more environmentally friendly driving habits.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendation which was agreed.

RESOLVED

The Committee endorsed the approach of the Council on Air Quality Management.

7 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY SCHEME 2020-24

Neal Barton, Policy, Performance and Partnerships Manager introduced the report which asks Members to consider a new Equality and Diversity Scheme as the existing scheme concludes this year. Minor amendments to the objectives have been made in the new Scheme, including making reference to work supporting the Armed Forces through the Armed Forces Covenant. The Annual Equality and Diversity report is also for consideration and includes information on the gender pay gap which is a requirement to report to the Government.

It was noted that the Scheme covers the nine protected characteristics but also looks at the intersectionality of those disadvantaged by virtue of where they live or their income level. This wider scope was welcomed by Members. Under that wider remit, it was deemed appropriate to include the Armed Forces, as this had been a request of the Committee in past meetings. He also drew Members attention of the recommendation that the Council adopts the IHRA definition of antisemitism.

Clarification was sought on the information held by the Council on places of worship in addition to those related to Christianity. The Policy, Performance and Partnerships Manager agreed to provide information outside of the meeting. It was also agreed that any views regarding the use of a Christian Prayer prior to Council meetings should be raised with the Chairman of the Council. The Policy, Performance and Partnerships Manager also clarified individual points raised on the report around the meaning of 'disability' and the groups to be contacted as part of the consultation period.

Discussion was held on the importance of installing more Changing Places toilets across the District, including ones that remain open outside of normal retail hours. Information was also provided on the services offered by the Wellbeing Team to target men of an older generation who would not usually seek medical attention, and to encourage women of school leaving age to take up exercise programmes.

A Member asked that the new Scheme highlight the importance of using correct language and terminology and it was agreed that this would be added in.

The Vice Chairman and the Cabinet Member for Community welcomed the Council's support in providing grant money to local groups celebrating the 75th Anniversary of VE day as it is another opportunity to support an area of the community that may be vulnerable by virtue of age and rural location.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendations which were agreed.

RESOLVED

The Committee:

- 2.1 Considered the proposed Equality and Diversity Scheme 2020-24 for consultation attached at Appendix 1;
- 2.2 Agreed to recommend to Council at the meeting on 1st April 2020 that the Equality and Diversity Scheme 2020-24 be adopted, subject to any comments or amendments following the consultation;
- 2.3 Agreed to recommend to Council that in approving the scheme the Council also adopts the IHRA definition of antisemitism.
- 2.4 Noted the Equality and Diversity Report 2019 set out in Appendix A.

8 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNITY, SERVICE DELIVERY & CUSTOMER SERVICE - WORK PROGRAMME

Tom Clark, Head of Regulatory Services and Solicitor to the Council, introduced the Work Programme noting that a new item had been put forward to the Chairman and this was under consideration for inclusion in the programme.

The Chairman noted that no Member wish to speak so moved to the recommendation to note the contents of the Committee's Work Programme for 2019/20 which was agreed.

RESOLVED

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

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

None.

The meeting finished at 8.02 pm

Chairman