

**Minutes of a meeting of Scrutiny Committee for Community,
Customer Services and Service Delivery
held on Wednesday, 23rd March, 2022
from 6.00 - 7.12 pm**

Present: Anthea Lea (Chair)
S Smith (Vice-Chair)

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| P Chapman | C Phillips | J Knight |
| R Clarke | A Sparasci | L Stockwell |
| S Ellis | P Bradbury | |
| M Pulfer | R Eggleston | |

Absent: Councillors A Boutrup, L Bennett, R Cartwright, B Dempsey,
J Edwards, T Hussain and D Sweatman

Also Present: Councillors J Ash-Edwards, P Brown, S Hatton and S Hillier

1 ROLL CALL AND VIRTUAL MEETING EXPLANATION.

The Vice-Chairman carried out a roll call to establish attendance at the meeting. The Solicitor to the Council provided information on the format of the virtual meeting.

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

Councillor Stockwell substituted for Councillor Bennett, Councillor Knight substituted for Councillor Boutrup, Councillor Eggleston substituted for Councillor Dempsey and Councillor Bradbury substituted for Councillor Sweatman.

3 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were received from Councillors Boutrup, Bennett, Cartwright, Dempsey, Edwards, Hussain and Sweatman.

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

Councillor Eggleston declared a personal interest in Item 7: Proposed Community Governance Reviews for the Administration and Electoral Arrangements of Town and Parish Councils affected by the outcome of the LGBCE's Electoral Review of Mid Sussex District Council as he is the Leader of Burgess Hill Town Council.

Councillor Pulfer declared a personal interest in Item 7: Proposed Community Governance Reviews for the Administration and Electoral Arrangements of Town and Parish Councils affected by the outcome of the LGBCE's Electoral Review of Mid Sussex District Council as he is the Leader of Haywards Heath Town Council.

Councillor Bradbury declared a personal interest in Item 8: Equality and Diversity Progress Report 2021 as he is Chairman of West Sussex County Council and a former Armed Forces champion.

5 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON 2 FEBRUARY 2022.

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2022 were agreed as a correct record and electronically signed by the Chairman.

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

The Chairman had no urgent business.

7 PROPOSED COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEWS FOR THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS OF TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS AFFECTED BY THE OUTCOME OF THE LGBCE'S ELECTORAL REVIEW OF MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Tom Clark, Solicitor and Head of Regulatory Services gave a brief introduction to note that the purpose of the meeting was to consider undertaking Community Governance Reviews (CGRs) and not the outcomes of such reviews.

Terry Stanley, Business Unit Leader for Democratic Services, introduced the report, reminding the Committee that following the outcomes of the Electoral Review of Mid Sussex District Council undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission, the proposal was to conduct Community Governance Reviews to align administrative and electoral boundaries as identified and explained within the Committee report. He emphasised that the Committee were being asked to consider commencing the CGR's and not potential outcomes of the reviews.

The Chairman proposed discussing each recommendation in turn and the Committee agreed. Discussions were held around the CGR's for Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath Town Councils and consequential considerations for the Parish Councils of Ansty & Staplefield, Lindfield and Lindfield Rural. There was concern those communities that needed to be consulted were not yet established as the Northern Arc was still under development. The impact on Parish Council budgets also needed to be considered. Councillor Pete Bradbury proposed an amendment to the recommendation 3.i (p.9) that it reads:

'Postpone to 2025 the proposed CGRs to consider administrative and electoral arrangements for Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath Town Councils and consequential considerations for the Parish Councils of Ansty & Staplefield, Lindfield and Lindfield Rural.'

This was seconded by Councillor Clarke. There was discussion of the proposed Motion and some Members raised concern that the same reasons for deferral could be raised again in 2025, if the reviews were delayed. Cllr. Bradbury assured Members that his Motion was specific in deferring the reviews only until 2025.

The Chairman took Members to the vote on the amendment to 3.i proposed by Councillor Bradbury, which was agreed, with 8 in favour and 4 against.

The Chairman introduced the second recommendation 3.ii (p.9). The Solicitor and Head of Regulatory Services clarified this recommendation was at the request of East Grinstead Town Council. Councillor Phillips proposed to agree the recommendation, and this was seconded by Councillor Clarke. The Chairman took Members to the vote which was agreed with 11 in favour and 1 abstention.

The Chairman moved to the recommendation 3.iii (p.9) and clarified for Members this was only to agree the draft Terms of Reference for East Grinstead. The recommendation was moved from the Chair and Members were asked to vote, which was agreed, with 11 in favour and 1 abstention.

The Chairman introduced the recommendation 3.iv (p.9) and proposed an amendment to the recommendation that it reads;

'Authorise the Head of Regulatory Services to make minor amendments to Terms of Reference in consultation with the Chairman and Portfolio Holder, if additional matters arise, and as otherwise may prove necessary during the period of the CGR's.'

This was seconded by Councillor Stockwell and the Chairman took Members to the vote on the amendment to 3. iv which was agreed unanimously.

Finally, Members were asked to note the recommendation set out at 3.v (p.9), the Chairman reminded Members this recommendation was only in relation to East Grinstead.

The Chairman took Members to the vote on the recommendation, which was agreed, with 10 in favour and 2 abstentions.

RESOLVED

The Scrutiny Committee for Community, Customer Services and Service Delivery agreed to:

- (i) Postpone to 2025 the proposed CGRs to consider administrative and electoral arrangements for Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath Town Councils and consequential considerations for the parish councils of Ansty & Staplefield, Lindfield and Lindfield Rural (as amended).
- (ii) Agree the proposed CGR to consider Councillor numbers and ward boundaries for East Grinstead Town Council.
- (iii) Agree for East Grinstead the draft Terms of Reference and Guidance for Respondents which have been the subject of consultation with the affected Town Council.
- (iv) Authorise the Head of Regulatory Services to make minor amendments to Terms of Reference in consultation with the Chairman and Portfolio Holder, if additional matters arise, and as otherwise may prove necessary during the period of the CGRs (as amended).
- (v) And to note that further reports would be provided as this Council's draft and final recommendations are available at later stages of the Reviews.

8 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY PROGRESS REPORT 2021.

Neal Barton, Policy, Performance and Partnerships Manager, introduced the Equality and Diversity Report 2021. He reminded Members that following the adoption of the

Equality and Diversity Scheme by the Council in 2020, it was agreed that this Committee would receive an Annual Report on progress. This also demonstrates how the Council continues to meet the requirements of the Equalities Act.

He noted that the Council's Equality and Diversity Work, as well as covering the 9 protected characteristics, looks at disadvantage by virtue of where people live, low income and skill level. It was also agreed within the scheme to cover work to support the Armed Forces Community and specifically the Armed Forces Community Covenant and Bronze Employer Recognition Scheme award.

The Policy, Performance and Partnerships Manager explained that the majority of work to support the protected groups had been focussed on the voluntary and community sector, as these groups continue to be heavily impacted by the pandemic.

He highlighted to the Committee the areas of progress, in particular, provision of the second stage of the £300k Covid Grants Fund Scheme; working with Citizens Advice to use the Community Champions Network to engage with local minority communities; providing a programme of Play Days on tour during school holidays at 9 locations across the District with free activities for local families; and the investment in the Council's property assets working to provide facilities with improved accessibility such as the new Council Chamber. Finally, he highlighted the work within the report on the Equality and Diversity of Council staff, including information on the gender pay gap.

The Policy, Performance and Partnerships Manager acknowledged a Member request to look into progressing the Employer Recognition Scheme. He gave a brief update on the work to support the Armed Forces community, including revising the Equality and Impact Assessment template and agreed to follow up this work in a separate meeting with the relevant Member.

A Member asked for clarity on how the referrals to the workplace health service were achieved. Emma Sheridan, Business Unit Leader for Community Service, Policy and Performance explained that the Well Being Team had a dedicated officer to network and engage with local businesses on initiatives both virtually and in-person.

In response to a query, the Policy, Performance and Partnerships Manager confirmed 'The Kiln' project was run by the same organisations as 'The Shed' men's mental health initiative. Members praised the success of 'The Shed' initiatives and the grants awarded.

The Cabinet Member for Leisure and Customer Services thanked officers for their hard work during such challenging times and was very supportive of 'The Shed' and promoting such initiatives and grant successes through Mid Sussex Matters, as suggested by another Member.

The Chairman thanked officers for the wide-ranging report and was pleased with such a positive take up of Covid grants. She noted that no other Members wished to speak and took Members to the vote as set out in the recommendation, which was agreed with 11 in favour and 1 abstention.

RESOLVED

The Scrutiny Committee endorsed the Council's approach to meeting its duties under the Equality Act, as evidenced by the Equality and Diversity Progress Report 2021 included at Appendix 1.

9 MSDC MODERN SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT.

Emma Sheridan, Business Unit Leader for Community Service, Policy and Performance introduced the MSDC Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Transparency Statement, reminding the Committee of the Council's obligations, following a notice of motion to pledge for Mid Sussex to become a slavery free community in October 2020. To comply with forthcoming changes to the Modern Slavery Act, the Council will be required to produce an Annual Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Transparency Statement. The report seeks the Committee to review and comment on the statement and if supported be recommended to Council for adoption.

A Member highlighted the importance of this document both locally and nationally and was very proud of the work by officers. In response to a Members request to have access to mandatory training via the online Learning Portal, which supports the Modern Slavery Act, the Business Unit Leader for Community Service, Policy and Performance advised this was already being rolled out and will be expanding over the year. The Member thanked officers for the hard work undertaken with the online Learning Portal.

The Chairman noted no other Members wished to speak and took Members to the vote on the recommendations contained in the report, which were agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

The Scrutiny Committee:

- (i) Reviewed and commented as appropriate on the attached draft Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Transparency Statement for 2022/23;
- (ii) Referred the Statement onto Council for adoption.

10 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNITY, CUSTOMER SERVICES AND SERVICE DELIVERY WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22.

Tom Clark, Head of Regulatory Services and Solicitor to the Council, introduced the Work Programme, informing Members that the Community Governance Review recommendations in Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common and Worth would be presented for consideration at the Scrutiny meeting on 25th May 2022.

As there were no indications for comment, the Chairman took Members to a vote on the recommendation contained in the report, which was agreed with 11 in favour and 1 abstention.

RESOLVED

The Scrutiny Committee noted the Committees Work Programme for 2021/22 as set out at paragraph 5 of the report.

11 QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.2 DUE NOTICE OF WHICH HAS BEEN GIVEN.

No questions were received.

The meeting finished at 7.12 pm

Chairman