

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

4.00pm 6 FEBRUARY 2013

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor West (Chair)

Also in attendance: Councillor Sykes (Deputy Chair), Janio (Opposition Spokesperson), Mitchell, Cobb, Cox, Deane, Pissaridou, G Theobald and Wakefield

Other Members present: Councillor Hawtree

PART ONE

39. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

39(a) Declarations of Substitutes

39.1 There were none.

39(b) Declarations of Interest

39.2 There were none.

39(c) Exclusion of press and public

39.3 In accordance with section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (“the Act”), the Committee considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during an item of business on the grounds that it was likely, in view of the business to be transacted or the nature of proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present during that item, there would be disclosure to them of confidential information (as defined in section 100A(3) of the Act) or exempt information (as defined in section 100(l) of the Act).

39.4 **RESOLVED-** That the press and public not be excluded.

40. MINUTES

40.1 Councillor Cox commented that the final sentence of minute item 33.12 should instead read “one opposition party had received a briefing and the other had not”.

40.2 **RESOLVED-** That, subject to the above amendment, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 November 2012 be approved and signed as the correct record.

41. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS CITY SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIP MEETING- FOR INFORMATION

41.1 **RESOLVED-** That the minutes of the previous City Sustainability Partnership meeting be noted.

42. CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

42.1 The Chair provided the following Communications:

“Last week, Councillor Janio and I were among 60 representatives gathered at Hollingbury Hill Fort to support the launch of the public consultation for Brighton & Hove and Lewes Downs to become an international Biosphere Reserve. The public is being asked to back the Biosphere bid and have their say on the Biosphere Partnership’s draft management strategy through the project website. A roadshow of further events will be travelling around the proposed Biosphere area over the next three months to meet people and display a stunning photographic exhibition of natural images of our area. May I ask all members to please help spread the word – as we need a large expression of public support for this important project.

I am pleased to report that the Warm Homes Healthy People Programme, a partnership between the City Council, the NHS and the local voluntary and community sector, has successfully secured a Department of Health grant of £122,314. This grant will be spent tackling cold homes and fuel poverty to address their impacts on health. This will include training for front line workers; financial inclusion checks; free energy assessments and advice; an emergency response service and emergency grants.

I am also delighted to say we have been successful in receiving funding for the Green Deal Pioneer Places pilot scheme. The council is leading a partnership with Brighton & Hove 10:10, Low Carbon Trust and the Green Building Partnership to offer 10 households the opportunity to win up to £10,000 worth of home-energy improvements each. There’s also the chance for 100 households to get a free, no obligation Green Deal Assessment worth up to £150. Residents need to book an assessment by 11 February to qualify. More details are on the Brighton & Hove City Council website.

The council has also secured EU funding from the Cascade programme for a study visit on sustainable energy generation to Eindhoven in early March. I will be joined by Damian Tow, who chairs the City’s Sustainable Energy Working Group, and officers working on city energy options and infrastructure.

Since the last meeting of this Committee I am happy to report that the final list of sites put forward for QEII Fields in Trust nomination consists of: Blakers Park; Carden Park; Hangleton Park; Horsdean Recreation Ground; Kingsway Bowls Club; St Nicholas Play Area and Woodingdean Central Park and Woodingdean Bowls Club.

I would like to thank the community representatives for putting their sites forward. The applications and plans were submitted to Fields in Trust who have confirmed all have been accepted. The final legal processes are expected to be completed by the end of this month. Each site will receive a plaque and a Royal Oak. Groups will also receive a toolkit to help them organise a launch event.

And finally, I am pleased to announce that the final funding for the exciting new skate park at The Level is now in place - thanks to a £150,000 Olympic legacy grant from Sport England.

Work on the skatepark has now started and should be complete together with the rest of the Level rebuilding works by July of this year”.

43. CALL OVER

43.1 **RESOLVED-** That all items on the agenda be reserved for discussion.

44. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

44.1 No items were received.

45. MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

45.1 No items were received.

46. FEES AND CHARGES 2013/14

46.1 The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director, Place that set out the proposed fees and charges for Regulatory Services (Environmental Health & Licensing and Trading Standards) for 2013/14.

46.2 Councillor Janio asked for further information on the removal of the Underage Sales Training charge as set out in paragraph 3.6 of the report.

46.3 The Head of Regulatory Services clarified that in previous years an Underage Sales Training programme had been offered to businesses for free to encourage compliance with age restricted sales and licensing legislation. There had been a good take up of the programme until 2011/12 when a fee had been introduced. Unfortunately, this reduced demand to nil which did not support helping business compliance or work of alcohol programme board so officers were requesting reversal back to no charge.

46.4 Councillor Mitchell commented that there was a £25 call out charge for pest control. She enquired whether this was added to the set fee for pest control treatment.

- 46.5 The Head of Regulatory Services replied that this was just a call out fee and was subsumed into the main charge for pest control. He stressed that the charge only applied in cases of no access to the premises.
- 46.6 Councillor Sykes stated that he welcomed the report which highlighted some of the important services provided by the council. He added that he believed there were problems in authorities where these services were provided by the private sector alone. Councillor Sykes supplemented that he welcomed the re-introduction of free training for underage sales.
- 46.7 Councillor Deane stated that she too welcomed the report and that these services were still provided by the public sector in particular pest control.
- 46.8 Councillor Pissaridou asked if the services made a profit via the fees charged.
- 46.9 The Head of Regulatory Services clarified that no surplus was made. The primary focus of the service was to cover costs via fee setting and where a surplus was found to be made, this fee was reduced. In addition, some fees were set to cover significant losses in other areas. The Head of Regulatory Services provided wasp treatment as an example which had significantly lower take up than forecast due to falling numbers of call outs related to a smaller wasp population.
- 46.10 **RESOLVED-** That the proposed fees and charges for 2013/14 as set out in the report are agreed.

47. PRESTON PARK PARKING REVIEW

- 47.1 The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director, Place that set out the findings of the review into parking controls at Preston Park.
- 47.2 Councillor Sykes asked if it was likely that the revised scheme would simply lead to people predominately using the car park in the hours that it was free of charge resulting in previous problems re-appearing.
- 47.3 The Head of Projects and Strategy replied that now the scheme had been operational for six months, officers were in a position to make projections based on the patterns of parking. They were confident that parking would not be used only when it was free.
- 47.4 Councillor Pissaridou asked why parking charges were not allocated to the transport budget as normally occurred.
- 47.5 The Head of Projects and Strategy clarified that income from penalty notices issued were allocated to the transport budget whereas parking charges at the park were ring-fenced for re-investment in the park.
- 47.6 The Principal Solicitor explained that the legal basis for this was further outlined in paragraph 8.5 of the report.

- 47.7 Councillor Theobald thanked the Head of Projects and Strategy for his detailed briefings on what was a complex matter. He added that he had been confident a surplus would be made and he was pleased that there would now be more periods of free parking
- 47.8 Councillor Cox welcomed the report asking if specific attention could be paid in using the surplus for investment in the cycle track and cycle club. He explained that the track was potentially a high standard facility and would provide real benefit with the next closest cycle track based in Southampton.
- 47.9 The Chair thanked Councillor Cox for his input. He agreed that there was huge potential in the cycle track and the Committee should look to facilitate this.
- 47.10 Councillor Mitchell relayed her thanks to the Head of Projects and Strategy for his briefings adding that it had been a good idea to review the progress of parking in Preston Park.
- 47.11 The Head of Projects and Strategy informed the Committee should the recommendations of the report be accepted, and objections to the necessary Traffic Regulation Order process would be reported to the Transport Committee as this was within its remit.

47.12 **RESOLVED-**

1. That Committee notes the outcome of the review.
2. That Committee approves the proposal to reduce the times parking charges apply from the current position of 9am – 6pm Monday to Sunday, to 9am – 4pm Monday to Friday and 2pm – 6pm Saturday and Sunday. The change would be subject to the statutory consultation process for Traffic Regulation Orders.
3. That Committee instructs officers to advertise the associated Traffic Regulation Orders. Any unresolved objections will be brought back to the Council's Transport Committee.
4. That the revised scheme is reviewed again formally 12 months after implementation with a report brought back to committee to assess the performance of the scheme and the improvements made to the park with the surplus funds.

48. CITY CENTRE COMMUNAL RECYCLING - PERMISSION TO CONSULT

- 48.1 The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director, Place that sought permission to consult on introducing communal recycling in the city centre.
- 48.2 The Chair stated that the trial of communal recycling in Brunswick and Adelaide had proven a great success. Residents there greatly preferred the communal bins to having to store black boxes in their homes. The Chair stated that the streets were now cleaner, and recycling rates were up 70%, benefitting the environment and reducing cost. The Chair added that the council had also been successful in their funding bid to government, who have granted £840,000 to the scheme so the council were now able to offer the benefits of communal recycling to all 29,000 residents across the city centre.

The proposed scheme included provision of 12 new recycling points on the seafront, which will be a great help combating litter problems on hot summer days

The Chair supplemented that he was particularly keen on the proposed incentive schemes that had been developed to support take up, and he was very grateful for the enthusiastic support the whole initiative has received from the Tourism Alliance.

- 48.3 Councillor Mitchell stated that she fully supported consultation and hoped for a good response. Councillor Mitchell commented that the proposed number of parking spaces to be lost under the scheme would be quite high and she hoped this could be re-evaluated as it would potentially have a knock-on effect on resident parking permit waiting lists.
- 48.4 The Head of Projects and Strategy replied that the proposals had been considered thoroughly with the Transport Team however, he would re-visit the parking space figures. Whilst the percentage of parking spaces lost would be low citywide, he agreed that this could create pressures in certain areas.
- 48.5 The Chair stated that he agreed that loss of parking should be kept to a minimum and he hoped the fuller scheme would confirm this. The Chair commented that initial concerns about loss of parking in the Brunswick & Adelaide ward prior to the trial had been allayed when the scheme commenced. The Chair reminded the Committee that their primary focus should be the benefits of communal recycling and not the loss of parking related to the scheme.
- 48.6 Councillor Theobald noted that he had written to the Secretary of State in support of funding and he was pleased that this had been received from central government. Councillor Theobald agreed that the loss of 271 parking spaces was very high and he felt this needed to be re-examined.
- 48.7 As ward councillor for the area, Councillor Sykes stated that Brunswick and Adelaide had lost 30 spaces out of 1300 for the trial which equated to approximately 3%. Recycling rates during the trial had increased steadily and that initial concerns about loss of parking and been allayed when the scheme was in practice.
- 48.8 Councillor Pissaridou asked that the number of parking spaces lost be prominent in the consultation documents.
- 48.9 The Head of Projects and Strategy replied that the proposals covered a very large area so the consultation documents would list the number of spaces lost specifically in each area.
- 48.10 Councillor Cox commented that the opportunity to remove the black box recycling containers was positive. He asked Councillor Sykes if the communal recycling trial had improved street cleanliness in Brunswick & Adelaide.
- 48.11 Councillor Sykes clarified that it had been significantly popular particularly as Brunswick & Adelaide had very narrow streets. This point had been made both formally in the consultation and informally to him by residents of his ward. It had also removed obstacles that presented difficulties to those that had sight or mobility issues.

- 48.12 Councillor Janio stated that he agreed with the reservations made about the loss of parking. He stated that the consultation documents should address this with total numbers for each controlled parking zone.
- 48.13 The Chair replayed that he would take particular interest in the issue to ensure that the consultation documents were clear and concise with regard to effects on parking.
- 48.14 Councillor Janio noted his disagreement with the collection of demographic information in the consultation process which he found to be overly bureaucratic.
- 48.15 The Strategic Director, Place clarified that the procedures for collecting demographic information was set out in the council's consultation framework. It would be necessary for the Committee to receive a report on the matter to amend the framework.
- 48.16 **RESOLVED-** That Committee gives permission to consult all households in the city centre communal refuse area on proposals to also introduce communal recycling and that a report is brought back to committee with the outcome of the consultation to inform any decision on extending communal recycling.

49. COMMUNAL REFUSE COLLECTION IN HANOVER, ELM GROVE AND THE TRIANGLE AREAS

- 49.1 The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director, Place regarding the results of the consultation on communal refuse collection in the Hanover, Elm Grove and Triangle areas and proposed recommendations based on the results.
- 49.2 The Chair stated that the benefits of communal refuse for improving street cleanliness and reducing pavement clutter were well accepted.
The results from the Hanover consultation were inconclusive, and ward members had agreed to hold a public meeting to hear views on revised proposals
Residents of the Lewes Road Triangle had given a clear indication in support of a scheme, and the proposal was to go ahead with a scheme but not including Park Crescent and Park Crescent Terrace.
As a ward Councillor for the Triangle he was very pleased with the proposal as a way forward on reducing the impact of waste had been sought for many years.
- 49.3 Councillor Mitchell asked if a public meeting would be an appropriate forum to gather sufficient feedback.
- 49.4 The Head of Projects and Strategy replied this would not be known until the meeting was held. He added that there was some confusion over the location of bins and the next course which he hoped would be resolved.
- 49.5 The Chair supplemented that the meeting would assist in potentially finding better locations for communal refuse bins. Ward councilors for the area had also been eager to hold a public meeting.

- 49.6 Councillor Pissaridou noted that this was the fourth consultation undertaken in the Hanover area and each one had created some element of confusion. She stated her concern that the council's consultation process was not robust enough.
- 49.7 The Chair replied that the council had a good record on consultations in general and this was constantly improving.
- 49.8 Councillor Deane stated that she welcomed the report and the flexibility therein which took account that a 'one size fits all' approach could not be applied.
- 49.9 As ward councillor for the Hanover area, Councillor Wakefield noted that the consultations had been very close. She believed it was fair to hold a public meeting on the issue and that rubbish and clutter had become a serious concern.

49.10 **RESOLVED-**

1. That the Committee notes the outcome of the consultation in the Hanover area which is inconclusive. Recommendations for this scheme will be brought to a later committee meeting pending the outcome of a public meeting.
2. That the Committee approves the implementation of communal refuse collection in the Lewes Road Triangle area as set out in Appendix 3, with the exception of Park Crescent and Park Crescent Terrace.

50. ADOPTION OF LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

- 50.1 The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director, Place that presented the results of the recently completed consultation on a draft Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) for Brighton & Hove and sought its adoption as council policy. The report was supplemented with a presentation by the Ecologist officer.
- 50.2 Councillor Deane asked if improvements in residential gardens could have an impact upon biodiversity.
- 50.3 The Ecologist officer clarified that research by Sheffield University had demonstrated that this could be of significant benefit.
- 50.4 Councillor Janio praised the project and noted the important role of the physics of the natural environment in enhancing mental well-being.
- 50.5 Councillor Wakefield praised the presentation for focussing on the positive improvement of biodiversity on children. She had extensive experience of this improvement, particularly with regard to behavioural issues.
- 50.6 Councillor Mitchell thanked the Ecologist officer for his presentation but also the 'Friends Of' groups who put some much work in across the city.
- 50.7 **RESOLVED-** That the Committee approves the adoption of the draft LBAP for Brighton and Hove as council policy.

51. LSTF JOINT BID - SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT SOLUTIONS FOR ENGLAND'S TWO NEWEST NATIONAL PARKS

50.1 The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director, Place that provided a summary of the Sustainable Transport Solutions for South Downs and New Forest National Parks and made recommendations to forward the project. The report was supplemented by a presentation.

50.2 The Chair stated that the report focussed on the successful partnership bid made with neighbouring local transport authorities that share a footprint in the two national parks, for funding from Local Sustainable Transport Fund.

The Chair commended the proposals to enhance sustainable access to the parks, through supporting better cycle and walking access from rail stations, supporting our Breeze Buses and through offering information on sustainable travel choices to visitors ahead of arrival.

The Chair added that with 85% of visitors to the South Downs national park currently arriving by car, this investment in sustainable travel is vital to achieving not only a reduction in car travel, but in improving access to the countryside for those who didn't own a car.

50.3 Councillor Mitchell stated that Stanmer Park was a key gateway in the city and asked if improvements were planned for this area.

50.4 The Transport Planner replied that there was a Stanmer park masterplan and the Transport team would seek to assist with that project.

50.5 The Chair supplemented that investment for Stanmer Village and Stanmer Park were being worked on. He added that recent investment in the Lewes Road transport links would help.

50.6 RESOLVED-

1. That the committee:

(a) Notes the success of the Sustainable Transport Solutions for England's Two Newest National Parks bid and support its continued development.

2 . Agrees:

(a) That the Council should continue to work in partnership with Hampshire County Council and six other partner authorities: East Sussex County Council, West Sussex County Council, Surrey County Council, Wiltshire County Council and the New Forest & South Downs National Park Authority to deliver the objectives outlined in the bid;

(b) Authorises the Strategic Director of Place to sign a formal partnership Joint Working Agreement with the other authorities confirming the detail of the joint working arrangements. A copy of the proposed partnership agreement is appended to this report (Appendix 3).

52. ITEMS REFERRED FOR COUNCIL

52.1 No items were referred to Full Council for information.

The meeting concluded at 6.00pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of