

Transport, Environment and Communities Select Committee 17 January 2017

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Buckinghamshire County Council
Select Committee
Transport, Environment and Communities

Minutes

TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE

Minutes from the meeting held on Tuesday 15 November 2016, in Mezzanine Room 2, County Hall, Aylesbury, commencing at 10.00 am and concluding at 12.30 pm.

This meeting was webcast. To review the detailed discussions that took place, please see the webcast which can be found at <http://www.buckscc.public-i.tv/>
The webcasts are retained on this website for 6 months. Recordings of any previous meetings beyond this can be requested (contact: democracy@buckscc.gov.uk)

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr T Butcher, Mr D Carroll (Chairman), Mrs L Clarke OBE, Mrs A Davies, Mr P Gomm, Ms A Macpherson, Mr B Roberts and Mrs J Teesdale (Vice-Chairman)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs M Aston, Mr S Dando, Mr M Kemp, Mrs C Marriott, Parfitt, Mr M Shaw and Ms K Wager

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th September 2016 were confirmed as a correct record.

4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were none.



5 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman welcomed the new Committee and Governance Advisor, Kama Wager and thanked Kelly Sutherland Committee and Governance Officer for her excellent support to the Committee.

6 SAFER BUCKS PLAN

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Margaret Aston, Deputy Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Cath Marriott, Community Safety Manager.

The Committee received an overview of the evidence base from the Strategic Assessment which helps to inform decisions around priorities for the 2017 3-year Safer Bucks Plan. Members had the opportunity at the very early stages of the plan being developed to ask questions and provide input into the emerging plan. The plan is due to be completed for Cabinet in the March 2017.

Questions from members covered the following areas:

- **The previous year budget, allocation of funding and outcomes.**
Members heard that last year the Safer Bucks Partnership board received £495,000 from the Police and Crime Commissioner. Members heard about examples of the projects and initiatives that were delivered and the success of those. They also heard how the community safety work in Bucks is held as good practice for innovative ideas and solutions. One of the ongoing key areas for Bucks is Violence (including Domestic), along with emerging issues such as Modern slavery, child exploitation and cybercrime. These are leading to a need for longer term planning and longer term interventions due to the complex and national nature of these issues. Members were informed that contract management of commissioned services has tightened to ensure outcomes achieved (although preventative projects are inherently difficult to measure). AN area highlighted for further improvements was in getting better engagement with service users of the services commissioned.
- **Issues around Domestic Violence and unaccompanied children:**
These issues were raised by members as issues that need to be addressed. Members heard how issues like these will always sit within the work that the partnership address and will be priorities going forward. The information provided in the report was on emerging trends that are new to the plan for the forthcoming years, and which required a shift in approach to a longer term plan, rather than an annual plan. Members were reassured that issues such as these would also be the foundation work of the partnership.
- **Social return on investment, and how to balance the annual budget/funding with the longer term planning approach.**
Members heard that the budget for next year is unknown as of yet, this will be confirmed in the New Year. There will be a change in funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner, who will retain 10% of the funding to commission services centrally.

Public consultation will be completed in January. The funding and longer term planning balance will be achieved through the greater use of commissioning of services and smarter contract management. The partnership in Bucks are working closely with national and regional partners to ensure that in Bucks we are able to influence national issues but link into national work taking place where it is appropriate and to ensure that there is not duplication of work, and effective sharing of information and activity.

- **How we benchmark nationally with the emerging national issues:**

The partnership work closely with national partners such as the Jill Dando Institute to share data and identify victims of these currently unknown crimes (the extent of the crimes are unknown, the victims unknown etc.). Information is shared at regional networks and the Police and Crime Commissioners office. For example, victim pathway profiling around adult exploitation will take place at a workshop on the 16th November 2016. In January service mapping will take place for the emerging crimes to identify services, partners and potential victims. Bucks are being seen as innovative and best practice in their approach to this.

- **Issues around street drinkers and sleepers and how these are addressed**

Members were told that these are seen as vulnerable people and are prioritised within this heading. The District Councils are working on these issues at a local level as it present a demand on their services. The Police have also highlighted rough sleeping as an issue of vulnerability (as opposed to nuisance).

- **Process for the development of the plan:**

Members heard that a partnership workshop will take place on 16.11.16 which will start to develop what the priorities might look like. December and January will be the consultation phase. At the end of January the priority areas will be confirmed and funding confirmed. In March the plan will go to Cabinet for endorsement.

The Chairman thanked Cath Marriott for her very helpful and detailed answers to the Member questions.

**ACTION: For the draft plan to come to committee and be added to the work programme
Committee and Governance Adviser**

7 TRANSPORT FOR BUCKINGHAMSHIRE UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed Mr Mark Shaw, Cabinet Member for Transportation, Mark Kemp, Simon Dando and Mark Avril.

The Cabinet Member provided the Members with a brief update before members asked questions on more specific issues which the Cabinet Member and the lead officers dealt with in turn.

The key areas raised by questions were:

- **Gulley Cleaning, the programme, checks carried out, and communication of programme of works to members and residents.**

The chairman had received a request from the Chairman of the Finance, Resources and Performance Committee to ask a question on the progress of the gulley cleaning programme following issues being raised within that committee. Members heard that there had been issues with recording and about the challenges in mapping gulleys. We heard that that the Council only has 2 gulley suckers and this was due to cost and limited budget to purchase and operate more. Members asked if they could have sight of the programme for gulley cleaning and told they could have this. Members were informed that the programme of works is weather dependent and therefore always subject to some change. Members questioned works supposedly carried out but had clearly not been done and were told that gulley cleaners are tracked, however sometimes they get there and can't clean the gulley's for reasons outside of their control. But they will check the example raised by Cllr Lesley Clarke who questioned the works that were supposed to have been completed in Daws Hill.

- **Street lighting:** Members raised concerns about the issues around broken street lights across the county. . Members were told that there have been issues raised and this is the time of year when most issues highlighted due to the darker evenings the issues become evident. Many of the lights are coming up to 40 years old and the end of their design life so there are plans for changes that are going through.
- **Customer Contact:** Members raised issue with the 28 day response time to customer enquiries and feel this is unacceptable. The cabinet Member told members he agrees and the response time has been reduced over the last 3-4 months significantly. There has been an increase in the amount of non-complex issues that are dealt with in 1-2 days. Members were told that the new systems in place allows the contact response times to be monitored very closely through dashboards for volume of complaints, type and time taken to address. There is also a new customer compliance officer in post for each depot.
- **How we prioritise expenditure of Buckingham to Winslow cycle path over other spending on making roads safer for cyclists in other areas?** Members received clarity that the funding for the cycle path was government funding specifically for a cycle path and could not be spent on anything else. If it was not spent they would lose it. Making changes to roads comes from the main capital maintenance budget for new roads etc. so is different. Members were grateful for this clarity for the residents.
- **Devolution:** Members asked when parishes can be given greater responsibility to fill potholes. The Cabinet Member said that they are happy to talk to parishes about list of services they may want to take on, but that there is no one size fits all approach.
- **Interim Staffing:** Members raised concerns over turnover of staff and reduction in number of Local Area Technicians and issues raised about interim areas managers making promises that not carried over when they leave. Members were told that across the service they are reducing interim staff. They are in process of recruiting into the vacancies for local area technicians. Issues around changes to staff are being address through the new system of CONFIRM to keep this updated with issues and works. In the past this has not been properly recorded.
- **Street Parking Machines:** Members raised concerns over changes to coinage in machines and machines out of order. They were told that they are looking at updating the machines and were investigating alternative methods of payment.

- **KPIs:** Members asked if they could have a list of the current KPIs and how we have performed against them and who signed them off.
- **Issues were also raised around the use of weather forecasting for gritting and mismatch between when our gritters were sent out and others not.** Members were told that our gritters are sent out on a domain basis and that there are some local high risk areas that need to be treated even if other areas in the domain wouldn't appear to need treatment. It was also observed that our is different from, for example, commercial gritters covering carparks etc. TfB use Meteor Group forecasts and grit based on ground not air temperature.
- **How TfB work with Utilities to coordinate works in roads:** Members were told that the law entitles utility companies to carry out works in the road. We work with utility companies to identify programmes of work, however by the nature of the repairs utilities are usually carrying out –it is time essential due to an urgent/emergency situation e.g. gas leak). Members were reassured that the network management team do monitor work of the utilities very closely and ensure they are compliant with the law.
- **Local Area Schemes:** Members raised issues about lack of communication with local members to input into the scoping of schemes as they have the local knowledge that should be utilised. Members heard that communication always been an issue and that in last 18 months has been much better but still room for improvement.

Action: Simon Dando to send the gulley cleaning programme to the Committee Advisor to send to Members.

ACTION: Simon Dando to share the dashboard on complaints monitoring with the committee members and forward the name of the new Customer Compliance officers to Members.

ACTION: Simon Dando to provide committee with list of KPIS – to be sent to Committee Advisor for circulation.

ACTION: Simon Dando to send members risk criteria for gritting.

Action: Simon Dando to circulate recent presentation on the work with the utilities to members via the committee advisor.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member and the Officers for their time and their detailed responses.

8 TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY: APPROACH TO DIGITAL AND CUSTOMER JOURNEY

The Chairman welcomed Mr Mark Shaw, Cabinet Member for Transportation and Peter Parfitt, Head of Business Improvement and Delivery. Peter Parfitt delivered a presentation to members on the digital projects within the Business Unit, and future opportunities to develop these further. The full presentation can be viewed on the webcast.

Members welcomed the presentation and asked questions on the following areas:

- **Customer Journey:** Member asked about the testing of digital tools and whether the public are used for this and were told that they do. For example the Maintain My Street App used public and user research to identify issues.
- **Member Dashboard:** Members asked what had happened to the Member dashboard that had been promised. They were told that this will now be completed by Christmas and the Cabinet Member apologised to members for the delay.
- **How demonstrate value for money and the outcomes of the funding received and ownership of software.** Members were told that the money in question £300, 000 funding from Innovate UK is monitored by external monitoring officer and most the costs went on the salary of the person carrying out the project. Monitoring officer reports are available. All money and allocation is monitored quarterly.
- **Monetisation of Data:** Key points made included who the data belongs to, when it will make money, how the business case process will work to identify whether it will generate income. There is a hope that BCC will get an income form the data eventually. At the moment the data is part of a trial so there is currently no income generated from it.
- **Ensuring inclusivity in the digital projects.** Members raised concern over ensuring there are safety nets for those residents who are unable to utilise digital options. They were reassured that there would be safety measures in place and a transition plan to address teething problems in new digital projects early on. .

Action Committee and Governance Adviser: For the work programme to be updated for an update on Digital projects and monetarisation of data to come back to the committee later next year.

9 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee noted the future work programme items for its next meeting on the 17th January 2016.

10 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

17th January 2016 at 10am in Large Dining Room, Judges Lodgings, Aylesbury. There will be a pre-meeting for members of the Committee only at 9.30am.

CHAIRMAN