

SOUTH HAMS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Minutes of a meeting of the **South Hams Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held on **Thursday, 1st July, 2021** at **2.00 pm** at the **Repton Room - Follaton House**

Present: **Councillors:**

Chairman Cllr Birch
Vice Chairman Cllr Smerdon

Cllr Austen
Cllr Jackson
Cllr McKay
Cllr Rose
Cllr Thomas

Cllr Chown
Cllr Jones
Cllr O'Callaghan
Cllr Spencer

In attendance:

Councillors:

Cllr Holway
Cllr Pearce

Cllr Hopwood

Officers:

Director – Governance & Assurance
Senior Specialist – Climate Change
Business Manager – Specialists
Customer Service Improvement Manager
Specialist – Democratic Services

4. **Minutes**
O&S.04/21
The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 1 April 2021 and the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 10 June 2021 were both confirmed as a correct record.
5. **Declarations of Interest**
O&S.05/21

Members and officers were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of the meeting but there were none made.

6. **Public Forum**

O&S.06/21

In accordance with the Public Forum Procedure Rules, the Chairman informed that no questions had been received for consideration.

7. **Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan Update**

O&S.07/21

Before the Executive Lead Member for Climate Change and Biodiversity introduced his report, a Member proposed a motion (that was subsequently seconded) that sought the approval of the Committee to set up a task and finish group to review the latest version of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan. In the event of this motion being approved, it would preclude the need for the report to be delivered to this Committee meeting. The Member felt that the report was so detailed and raised many questions which meant that it could not be reviewed sufficiently in the time allowed, therefore he proposed the setting up of a time limited Task and Finish Group that would then present its conclusions back to a future Committee meeting.

During the debate, some Members raised the concern that this should not duplicate work nor unduly impact on officers' time.

One Member felt that the task and finish group would be an excellent use of Members' time and would help support the officers who were doing a great job but with limited resources on such an important existential crisis.

The Chairman reminded the Committee that they had been tasked with scrutinising the Action Plan at Full Council on 17 December 2020, with reviews to be six monthly, and a Task and Finish Group would facilitate this important task.

It was outlined that the terms of reference for the Task and Finish Group would be critical to ensure a productive outcome and the Group could have a positive impact on policy development. It was suggested that the Executive Lead Member for Biodiversity should attend the Group meetings to ensure compliance with the Strategy and to minimise duplication. Staff resourcing of the Task and Finish Group was outlined as requiring an administrator, and input from the Director of Governance and Assurance, and the Senior Specialist for Climate Change.

When put to the vote, the motion was declared **CARRIED**.

It was then:

RESOLVED

1. That a Task and Finish Group be set up to consider the report of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan dated 1 July 2021 in accordance with the terms of reference given to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by item 3 of the Full Council resolution at Minute 28/20 of the meeting held on 17 December 2020, and its role in Policy Review and Development as laid out in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules; and
2. That the Group report back with any recommendations to the meeting of the Panel to be held on Thursday 4 November 2021. The Group will be chaired by Cllr D. Thomas and consist of four Members of the Conservative Group and four Members of the Opposition Group to be selected by the Leader of each Group.

8. **Performance Management Report**

O&S.08/21

The Executive Lead Member for Customer Satisfaction and Improvements introduced a report which provided the Committee with an update on the performance across the Council. The Member outlined that overall performance had been very good considering the impact of the Pandemic and applauded officers for this achievement. The one area which had under-performed was the Contact Centre who had experienced increased levels of contact due to the pandemic and had received around 200 extra calls per day over the last two months in response to the waste situation. Therefore, the performance of the Contact Centre was deemed to be acceptable under the circumstances. The Lead Member confirmed that the level of waste calls being received by the Contact Centre had fallen significantly in recent days.

The queue buster technology had begun to be rolled out which provided callers with the option to select a call back whilst maintaining their position in the queue. The Lead Member concluded her remarks with a request for these Key Performance Indicators to be reviewed as a regular item on the Committee's Work Programme. The officer confirmed that live dashboard reviews would soon be possible for Members to see real time performance information.

Following a question from the Chairman, the officer confirmed that the project would be completed by the end of this year. The officer explained that 'less time dependent work' referred to in point 2.2 of the attendant report related to processes such as debt management, discount applications, and data cleansing.

A Member welcomed the ability for Members to get easy access to the figures and it was confirmed that the dashboards would be accessible from the desktop of Members' laptops.

Following discussion around the planning enforcement figures, the Chairman proposed two additional recommendations were added. These were voted on and agreed. The Leader outlined that the number of outstanding cases was reducing and that staffing issues were being resolved. The Leader then asked for Members to contact the enforcement case manager to review cases in their area that could be defined as 'neighbour disputes' and therefore not planning enforcement cases: these could then be removed from the outstanding list. The Leader felt that the

data being presented as a graph was not particularly helpful and that a traffic light system based on definitive performance indicators with a short summary for those defined as amber and/or red. The Chairman hoped that this could form part of the report as outlined in recommendation 4 below.

It was then:

RESOLVED

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1. requests a report, to come to the Committee's 4 November 2021 meeting, on progress being made in improving the Contact Centre performance and on the changeover as set out in paragraphs 1.5 and 1.6 of the attendant report;
2. notes the performance figures shown in the Pentana report attached at Appendix A of the attendant report;
3. has reviewed the information provided in the dashboards and provided feedback to the portfolio holder on any additional measures required to scrutinise performance; and
4. in respect of planning enforcement, requests a report be presented to the Committee at its 30 September meeting following the previous recommendations arising out of the Committee meeting on 1 April 2021 (minute O&S.49/20 a) refers.

9. **Task and Finish Group Updates (if any)**

O&S.09/21

There were no task and finish group updates provided to this meeting.

10. **2021/22 Panel Work Programme: Latest Version**

O&S.10/21

The Chair referred to the item on the work programme for the meeting on the 22 July 2021 for a review of the New Waste Service Implementation. As representatives of the contractor, FCC Environment (FCC), had recently attended two Council meetings (Extraordinary Overview and Scrutiny on 10th June 2021 and Full Council on 27 June 2021), the Chair asked the Committee to rescind the request made at the Overview and Scrutiny meeting on 21 June 2021 for FCC representatives to attend in person. This was agreed to by the Committee. The Chairman then proposed new recommendations which were voted on and agreed.

Following a request from a Member to see the legal obligation between FCC and the Council, the Chair said that he was meeting with the Monitoring Officer later and would raise this request. It was confirmed that the Executive were still meeting weekly with the contractor.

It was then:

RESOLVED

1. That the attendance of FCC representatives to the meeting on 22 July 2021 be postponed and that the representatives attend the Committee meeting on 30 September 2021 instead;
2. That the Lead Executive Member for Waste and Recycling, and relevant officers be requested to attend the meeting on 22 July 2021 to provide an update on the performance of FCC and actions taken to bring about sustained improvements in the delivery of the waste service; and
3. That a report be provided to the Committee meeting to be held on 30 September 2021 on action to be taken by Council to bring about a fully operational waste service as originally provided for by the contract between FCC and Council.

The Meeting concluded at 3.19 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
