

SOUTH HAMS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL



Minutes of a meeting of the **South Hams Overview and Scrutiny Panel** held on **Thursday, 19th November, 2020 at 10.00 am** at the **Via Skype**

Present: **Councillors:**

Chairman Cllr Birch
Vice Chairman Cllr Smerdon

Cllr Austen	Cllr Chown
Cllr Jackson	Cllr McKay
Cllr Reeve	Cllr Rose
Cllr Spencer	Cllr Sweett
Cllr Thomas	

In attendance:

Councillors:

Cllr Abbott	Cllr Baldry
Cllr Bastone	Cllr Hawkins
Cllr Hodgson	Cllr Holway
Cllr Hopwood	Cllr Long
Cllr Pearce	Cllr Pringle
Cllr Rowe	Cllr Taylor

Officers:

Chief Executive
Deputy Chief Executive
Director – Governance & Assurance
Democratic Services Manager
Head of Strategy & Projects
Head of Place Making
Head of ICT
Head of Housing, Revenues & Benefits
Safeguarding Specialists
Community Safety Partnership Representatives

18. **Minutes**
O&S.18/20
The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 8 October 2020 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

19. **Declarations of Interest**
O&S.19/20
Members and officers were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of the meeting. These were recorded as follows:

Cllr J Sweett declared a personal interest in Item 11: 'Preparation for Livewest Attendance at Future Panel Meeting' (Minute O&S.26/20 below refers) by virtue of having two tenancy agreements with Livewest and remained in the meeting and took part in the debate thereon.

20. **Urgent Business**
O&S.20/20
The Chairman informed that he had requested that one urgent item be raised at this meeting. The item related to the recent IT problems that had been experienced by Members during the migration from Skype to Teams and would be considered immediately.

The Head of IT Practice proceeded to apologise to Members and advised that he had mistakenly migrated Members on Sunday, 15 November 2020 instead of the agreed scheduled date of Thursday, 19 November 2020. In addition, there had been an unforeseen Outlook Mailbox issue that had magnified the severe problems that had been experienced by Members. In concluding his update, the Head of Practice advised that, whilst the issues had still not been resolved to his satisfaction, he wished to thank the Leader and Lead Executive Member for their support during what had been a very difficult time.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- (a) Members accepted the apology and explanation from the lead officer and proceeded to thank him for his honesty;
- (b) The lead officer confirmed that he was aware of an issue with the Blackberry Client application that was affecting the ability of Members to access their emails via their mobile phones. Whilst the issue remained unresolved, officers were actively working on a solution;
- (c) It was recognised that the Surface Go devices were no longer the most appropriate IT solution for Members given the remote ways of working that have been adopted during the COVID-19 Pandemic. As a result, officers were currently obtaining quotations to procure laptops for all Members and a project plan for their roll-out was also being drafted. When questioned, officers confirmed that they would investigate the potential to recycle the Surface Go devices as an education tool for those who were unable to afford devices for their children.

21. **Public Forum**

O&S.21/20

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

22. **Executive Forward Plan**

O&S.22/20

The Panel was presented with the most recently published Executive Forward Plan and noted its content without any further comment.

23. **Community Safety Partnership**

O&S.23/20

The Panel considered a report that provided Members with the opportunity to scrutinise the work of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) as defined by Sections 19 and 20 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 and the Crime and Disorder (Overview & Scrutiny) Regulations 2009.

During discussion, reference was made to:-

- (a) the Turning Corners Programme. The Panel noted that the CSP had recently been successful in obtaining a four year bid from the Office of the Police Crime Commissioner to a value of £225,000 per year. Members congratulated the CSP representatives on this achievement and recognised that this funding would have a significant impact;
- (b) increased instances of radicalisation and extremist behaviour. The representatives informed that there was an upward trend in such behaviours and this was becoming a key area of work for the Partnership;
- (c) the Local Delivery Plan. At the request of the Panel, it was agreed that a copy of the Plan would be circulated to all Members of the Council;
- (d) the annual CSP Forum. The Panel was advised that the annual CSP Forum was to be held on Wednesday, 9 December 2020 and as many Members as possible were encouraged to attend this event;
- (e) a proposal for a future CSP Member Workshop. A motion was **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED** as follows:

'That the Panel request that an all Member Workshop be convened with Community Safety Partnership Representatives early in 2021.'

When put to the meeting, this proposal was declared **CARRIED**.

It was then:

RESOLVED

1. That the contents of the Annual Report be welcomed and the Community Safety Partnership representatives be congratulated on obtaining the £900,000 funding towards the Turning Corners Programme;

2. That the Panel request that an All Member Workshop be convened with Community Safety Partnership representatives early in 2021; and
3. That, once finalised, the Local Delivery Plan be circulated to all Members.

24. **Safeguarding Policy: Annual Review**

O&S.24/20

A report was considered that provided Members with the opportunity to annually scrutinise and review Safeguarding practices and procedures.

In discussion, the Panel supported the statement in the presented agenda report whereby the Safeguarding training packages that were offered by the Council should be mandatory for all staff and Members to complete.

It was then:

RESOLVED

1. That the Panel continue to review safeguarding on an annual basis; and
2. That the Executive be **RECOMMENDED** to adopt the revised Safeguarding Policy (as set out at Appendix A of the presented agenda report) and that a safeguarding related training package for all staff and Members be mandatory to complete.

25. **Draft Recovery Plan - Verbal Update and Task and Finish Group Updates**

O&S.25/20

The Corporate Director – Governance and Assurance provided a verbal progress update on the Draft Recovery Plan. In so doing, he advised that:

- 'Build Back Better' was proving to be an ongoing challenge for the Council since the second national COVID-19 Lockdown had been imposed;
- the draft Recovery Plan was intended to be presented to the Executive meeting to be held on 3 December 2020 before being recommended for adoption at the Council meeting to be held on 17 December 2020;
- the Economy was to be a key theme within the Recovery Plan. As a result, the lead officer introduced the Head of Place Making (who had recently joined the employ of the Council) to provide a brief outline of her employment history and initial thoughts on her new role.

(a) Localities and Communities Task and Finish Group: Concluding Report

The Panel proceeded to consider the concluding report of the Localities and Communities Task and Finish Group and the following points were raised:-

- (i) Members wished to record their thanks to the Task and Finish Group

and lead officers for their work in producing the concluding report. Furthermore, the Panel thanked the Locality Team for their excellent work during the last year;

- (ii) Some Members expressed their view that there was a need to take into account the potential for an increased Locality Service to be provided during the February half-term period;
- (iii) It was hoped that further information would be available with regard to a revised team structure (and supporting costings) in time for the Executive meeting to be held on 3 December 2020;
- (iv) In support of the proposals, the Panel felt that the recommendations would enable for greater resilience and flexibility within the Locality Service.

It was then:

RESOLVED

That that Panel note that the Localities and Communities Task and Finish Group has concluded its Review and **RECOMMEND** to the Executive to consider:

1. Providing a seven day-a-week Locality Service for the following dates:
 - Easter or 1 April (whichever is the earliest) to 30 September; and
 - October half-term school holiday week;
2. Creating a single point of contact for local Ward Members with increased on-street officer visibility and problem solving capacity within each Locality; and
3. Implementing a new Locality Team Structure (to support parts 1 and 2 of the recommendations (above)) which will ensure:
 - Clearly defined roles that support the delivery of scheduled tasks and the work of Community Groups, developing Service Level Agreements where necessary; and
 - Improved office based and field support for mobile office.

(b) Consultation and Engagement Task and Finish Group: Concluding Report

RESOLVED

1. That that Panel note that the Consultation and Engagement Task and Finish Group has concluded its Review;
2. That the draft Community Consultation & Engagement Strategy be endorsed; and

3. That the Executive **RECOMMEND** that Council consider and adopt the draft Strategy.

26. **Preparation for Livewest Attendance at Future Panel Meeting**

O&S.26/20

The Chairman advised that Livewest representative(s) had now confirmed that they would be able to attend the Panel meeting to be held on the afternoon of Thursday, 14 January 2021.

In recognition that Livewest was a key external partner to the Council, it was agreed that all Members (irrespective of being on the Panel or not) should be invited to submit any questions that they wish to be raised in advance of the meeting.

27. **Annual O+S Work Programme**

O&S.27/20

During consideration of the latest version of the Panel's Annual Work Programme, it was agreed that those items that were currently listed as 'to be considered for scheduling' should be determined at a meeting of the Panel Chairman, Panel Vice-Chairman and lead officers.

The Meeting concluded at 12.20 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
