

Minutes of the meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Monday, 14 March 2022 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor C D Zosseder

Councillors: P M Brivio
D R Friend
P D Jull (as substitute for Councillor D A Hawkes)
S C Manion
M Rose
R S Walkden
P Walker
H M Williams

Officers: Strategic Director (Corporate Resources)
Head of Commercial Services
Housing Policy Officer
Democratic and Corporate Services Manager

117 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T A Bond and D A Hawkes.

118 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, Councillor P D Jull had been appointed as substitute member for Councillor T A Bond.

119 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

120 MINUTES

The consideration of the Minutes was deferred.

121 DECISIONS OF THE CABINET RELATING TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The decisions of the Cabinet relating to recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on 28 February 2022 were noted.

122 ISSUES REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY COUNCIL, CABINET, OR ANOTHER COMMITTEE

The Democratic and Corporate Services Manager advised that there were no issues referred to the Committee by Council, Cabinet or another Committee.

123 NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING KEY DECISIONS

The Democratic and Corporate Services Manager presented the Notice of Forthcoming Key Decisions to the Committee for its consideration.

In the absence of any dissent, it was agreed that the Notice of Forthcoming Key Decisions be noted.

124 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Democratic and Corporate Services Manager presented the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme to the Committee for its consideration.

Members identified the following items for inclusion in the work programme:

- Review of Memorial System (such as benches);
- Regeneration Update (on-going, regular updates several times a year);

The Democratic and Corporate Services Manager requested that Members submit key questions for the Clinical Commissioning Group to assist with identifying the necessary agencies that would need to attend to answer.

RESOLVED: That the Work Programme be noted, subject to the inclusion of regular regeneration updates and a review of memorial system.

125 PUBLIC SPEAKING

The Democratic and Corporate Services Manager advised that no members of the public had registered to speak on items on the agenda to which the public speaking protocol applied.

126 FIRST HOMES SALES AND RESALES POLICY

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) presented the report on the First Homes Sales and Resales Policy.

Members were advised that the policy had been developed in line with Government guidance and had been drafted by the Housing Development team to primarily focus on the administrative processes involved.

The properties concerned were part of the affordable housing element of new developments.

Members raised the following points:

- The need for clarity in respect of resale marketing, which officers advised that they would re-examine to ensure it was sufficiently clear.
- To question if the delegation to a specific officer set out in the report would limit the operation of the policy. It was advised that officers did not believe that it would limit the operation of the policy.
- That the policy related to general needs housing not specialist housing.
- The commercial basis of the transactions as opposed to a housing need requirement. It was confirmed that there was no housing need requirement.

127 REVIEW OF ON AND OFF-STREET PARKING CHARGES

The Head of Commercial Services presented the annual Review of On and Off-Street Parking Charges. The Portfolio Holder for Transport, Licensing and Regulatory Services, Councillor M Bates, was also in attendance.

Members were advised that parking charges were last increased in Dover District in June 2020, having previously been frozen for four years before then.

A full review of resident parking schemes was currently underway with consideration being given to the option of reducing the size of some permit zones. There were also additional permit zones being implemented. All new schemes would be presented to the Dover Joint Transportation Advisory Board.

In respect of the Council's rural car parks, the Head of Commercial Services was of the view that in the current economic situation there was not a sufficient case for introducing charging. In addition, if charging were to be introduced it would have to be on a cashless charge system only and a more comprehensive trial of this method of sole payment was required prior to implementation. While it was acknowledged that cashless parking would be important for the future, there was a limited debate for it at present.

The overall impact of the proposed charges was forecast to generate additional income which was needed to fund required maintenance and enforcement activity. However, Members were informed that the Council had seen a significant impact on parking demand as a result of the pandemic and if parking utilisation did not return to pre-pandemic levels this could lead to a financial pressure for the Council.

Members raised the following points:

- The impact of not charging for rural car parking and the fairness of this compared to urban areas where parking charges were enforced. Members were advised that the parish councils did not support the introduction of charging for rural parking nor did they wish to take on the management and maintenance of rural car parks.
- The need to show all car parks charging arrangements in the annual report. The Head of Commercial Services accepted this point.
- The reason behind the introduction of linear charging in Coombe Valley Road. Members were advised that this was due to displaced parking from the hospital making it difficult for residents and customers of local businesses to park.
- To question whether the council had sufficient enforcement resources available. In response, it was stated that there were 12 posts, with 4 current vacancies at advertisement.

It was moved by Councillor P D Jull, and duly seconded by Councillor R S Walkden

That it be recommended to Cabinet that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee acknowledge the reasons for the increase in parking charges in 2022/23 but for 2023/24 request a review of the end period of off-street parking to encourage better utilisation of parking spaces before 3pm.

On being put to the vote the Motion was LOST.

In the absence of any further recommendation, and in the absence of any dissent, it was agreed to note the report.

The meeting ended at 6.57 pm.