

Minutes of the meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Monday, 26 July 2021 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor C D Zosseder

Councillors: M Bates
T A Bond
P M Brivio
K Mills (as substitute for Councillor H M Williams)
M Rose
P Walker

Also Present: Mr D Bannister (Port of Dover)

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

40 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor H M Williams.

41 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, Councillor K Mills had been appointed as substitute member for Councillor H M Williams.

42 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

43 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 5 July 2021 were noted.

44 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.

45 ELECTRIC HEATING AND PHOTO-VOLTAIC INSTALLATIONS AT AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS AT KIMBERLEY CLOSE, DOVER AND STOCKDALE GARDENS, DEAL

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) presented the report on Electric Heating and Photo-Voltaic (PV) Installations at Affordable Housing Developments at Kimberley Close, Dover and Stockdale Gardens, Deal.

Members were advised that the Cabinet had previously approved projects to build a total of 24 flats as interim housing for homeless people at two DDC owned sites at Kimberley Close, Dover and Stockdale Gardens, Deal.

The report was seeking an additional expenditure of £160,000 (or £6,666 per flat) in order to enable electric heating to be installed in all 24 flats. This would avoid the use of gas fired boilers and provide for enhanced PV installations to all the buildings. The use of electric heating with PV installations would significantly reduce the environmental impact of the developments and reduce the long-term heating costs for the tenants, helping to mitigate fuel poverty concerns whilst tenants were in the accommodation.

Dover District Council's net zero carbon target would include avoiding the use of gas as a fuel in line with the anticipated changes to legislation not to permit new domestic buildings to use gas from 2025. It was therefore considered appropriate to avoid its use in all new build affordable housing.

Members considered alternative heating methods to electric boilers such as hydrogen or air/ground source boilers. The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) advised that whilst gas boilers were cheaper to operate than electric boilers, when combined with PV they became cheaper to run than gas boilers. In addition, electric heating was future proofed where as alternative heating sources might not be.

RESOLVED: That it be recommended to Cabinet that decision CAB 22 be endorsed as follows:

- (a) That the upgrade to the incoming electricity main to Kimberley Close, allowing electric heating to be installed in lieu of gas, and the associated additional budget required, be approved.
- (b) That the installation of enhanced photo-voltaic systems to both Kimberley Close and Stockdale Gardens developments, and the associated budget required, be approved.

46 ANGLING AT ADMIRALTY PIER

The Chairman welcomed Mr D Bannister, CEO of the Port of Dover, to discuss the issue of angling at Admiralty Pier.

Members were advised that Admiralty Pier had closed in March/April 2020 and whilst closed the Port of Dover had reviewed its protocols and found some issues that needed to be addressed before angling could resume on the Pier. Prior to the review it had been assumed that angling would have been able to resume without too much problem.

These issues were in respect of emerging security issues. In accordance with the Port Security Regulations 2003, Admiralty Pier was a controlled area but became a secure area when a cruise ship arrived. There were also further risk assessments carried out following the Manchester Arena and London Bridge attacks that had required changes to be made and additional legislation was expected before the end of the year.

The Port of Dover was keen to continue a dialogue with anglers and it had not finalised arrangements at this point. As part of this, the Port of Dover was examining operating a trial of new security arrangements, the costs of which would be met by the Port of Dover. As part of the trial, they were keen to involve disabled participants.

Members were advised that anglers had traditionally come from a great distance to use Admiralty Pier and there were concerns over a 'lone wolf' style attack as there were limited evacuation routes from the Pier. The proposed new security arrangements for anglers were actually similar to those already used by disabled anglers.

There was also a significant amount of infrastructure work required in the Eastern Docks including several listed buildings that required work and some railings and access points that needed work to be made safe. Admiralty Pier was primarily a sea defence and it had suffered damage in a previous storm. The Port of Dover had allocated £150 million for these works and the Marina Pier and Curve had been opened to the public.

The Port of Dover undertook a number of community events and had distributed £750,000 in grants to 45,000 people in and around Dover.

Ultimately, the Port of Dover was seeking to balance its obligations with the desires of sea anglers so that they could resume fishing on Admiralty Pier. The current situation was the start of a process of dialogue that would hopefully achieve that.

Angling Trust

The Angling Trust was the national association for anglers in England.

Members were advised that the Dover Sea Angling Association (DSAA) had used Admiralty Pier since 1903 and wanted to achieve a mutually acceptable position with the Port of Dover. However, the proposed arrangements were financially unsustainable for the DSAA.

The DSAA had provided security on Admiralty Pier for 30 years when in use by anglers and had encouraged disabled anglers to use the facility as it was one of the view suitable locations. It was stated that angling had been one of the few sports that had been able to continue during the pandemic and that it helped with mental health.

'Little Brian'

Councillor C D Zosseder read out a letter from 'Little Brian' who was 9 years old and for whom angling was his favourite hobby. However, he needed a flat stable surface to fish from and the Pier was one of the few locations where he could do this.

The alternative of Samphire Hoe was not as enjoyable, and he could not fish on the beach. While the top deck of Deal Pier was suitable it was very crowded, and he often could not get a space. In contrast, Admiralty Pier had easy transport access, no stairs and was easily accessible to the disabled.

'Little Brian' asked that access to Admiralty Pier for anglers be restored.

Councillor S C Manion asked the Chairman if she could respond to 'Little Brian' on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and thank him for his letter and the points he raised. Councillor C D Zossedler advised Members that she would be pleased to do so.

Dover Sea Angling Association

The Chairman and the President of the Dover Sea Angling Association spoke in respect of the proposals put forward by the Port of Dover.

They expressed hope that the letter setting out proposals from the Port of Dover was only the starting position as the proposals were disproportionate and financially unworkable. The DSAA did not see how it could afford to restart angling under the proposals.

There was concern expressed over the dilapidated state of a walkway on Admiralty Pier that was unsafe to use and questioned why the Port of Dover had not kept it in a safe working condition.

It was pointed out that disabled anglers had benefited from the use of Admiralty Pier for 100 years prior to its closure and the access for disabled and junior anglers had been championed by the Port of Dover in the past.

The DSAA had requested a meeting three weeks ago on this matter and had not received a response.

Public Speakers

The Chairman called upon any Members of the public present who wished to speak in respect of this item. The following points were raised:

- To question if the new Border Force facility had impacted on the security arrangements for Admiralty Pier and if so, why it was not paying for the increased security costs.
- To question whether the PROTECT duty was being correctly applied by the Port of Dover and whether the issuance of passes for those using the Pier would be a deterrent in the case of a 'lone wolf' attack.
- That angling helped those with health conditions.
- That the DSAA had staff that could control access and limit it to Member only access if security was a concern.
- That the Port of Dover had previously promoted angling and had promised that angling would continue at Admiralty Pier.
- Concerns that the issues were because of the objections of a single cruise company. The Port of Dover was asked to confirm if this was the case.
- That anglers would be willing to discuss what arrangements could be put in place for when cruise ships were in the docks. Mr Bannister advised that he was not aware of any objections from cruise companies to angling but acknowledged that one client had not properly appreciated it.
- There was concern that the security risk assessment would also impact on other events, such as litter picks.
- Members were advised that the Port of Dover's risk assessments could not be published due to security concerns, but it was emphasised that

arrangements had yet to be finalised and the Port would ensure that all measures were proportionate to the risk.

- That angling was a means by which the working class could represent their country. It was noted that Dover had previously hosted the world angling championships.
- That hoarding put up during construction works had promoted angling at the Pier.
- The concern that with the Southern Breakwater closed due to asbestos concerns and changes to the Prince of Wales Pier there would be nowhere left to fish if Admiralty Pier was not open to anglers.
- That in 1987 the Angling Trust had raised £180,000 to contribute towards damage as a result of the hurricane that year and was assured that it would have a lifelong lease.

Members

The following points were raised by members of the committee:

- That any security arrangements needed to be proportionate to the risk. For example, at Deal Pier there were 200 anglers but no security concerns. There were also more significant targets at the Port of Dover than sea anglers in the event of an attack.
- To call upon Mr Bannister to work with the Dover Sea Angling Association to achieve an affordable and sustainable solution. It was stated that this would be a good opportunity for the Port of Dover to show its support for the local community.
- That a fresh start in the relationship between the Port of Dover and the angling community was needed. Members called upon Mr Bannister to personally oversee the process and find a mutually acceptable solution.
- To point out that angling was the highest participation sport in the country, and it should not be ignored.

Councillor C D Zosseder called upon Mr Bannister and the Dover Sea Angling Association to work together to find a solution. She also thanked everyone for attending the meeting and expressed the hope that it had been productive for all parties.

The meeting ended at 8.50 pm.