

## **REGENERATION, COMMUNITY AND CULTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**6 AUGUST 2015**

### **PETITIONS**

Report from: Richard Hicks, Acting Director, Regeneration,  
Community and Culture

Author: Steve Platt, Democratic Services Officer

#### **Summary**

To advise the Committee of any petitions received by the Council which fall within the remit of this Committee including a summary of the response sent to petitioners by officers.

#### **1. Budget and policy framework**

- 1.1 In summary, the Council's Petition Scheme requires the relevant Director to respond to the lead petitioner usually within 10 working days of the receipt of the petition by the Council. Overview and Scrutiny Committee are always advised of any petitions falling within their terms of reference together with the officer response. There is a right of referral of a petition for consideration by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee by the petitioners if they consider the Director's response to be inadequate. Should the Committee determine that the petition has not been dealt with adequately it may use any of its powers to deal with the matter. These powers include instigating an investigation, making recommendations to Cabinet and arranging for the matter to be considered at a meeting of the Council.
- 1.2 The petition scheme is set out in full in the Council's Constitution at:  
<http://www.medway.gov.uk/councilanddemocracy/council/constitution.aspx>
- 1.3 Any budget framework implications will be set out in the specific petition response.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Council's Constitution provides that petitions received by the Council relating to matters within the remit of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be referred immediately to the relevant Director for consideration at officer level.

- 2.2 Where the Director is able to fully meet the request of the petitioners a response is sent setting out the proposed action and timescales for implementation. The petition organiser may request to refer the matter to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee if s/he is not satisfied with the answer and has given reasons for their dissatisfaction.
- 2.3 For petitions where the Director is unable to meet the request of petitioners or where there are a range of alternative responses the petition will be referred to the next relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee for discussion.

### 3 Completed petitions

- 3.1 A summary of responses relevant to this Committee that have been accepted by the petitioners are set out below.

<b>Subject of petition</b>	<b>Response</b>
Request for a zebra crossing in Bush Road, Cuxton	Medway Council receives many requests for safety improvements, such as pedestrian crossing facilities, and each request is carefully considered. Many factors are taken into account including the delay or difficulty in crossing the road and safety history. In terms of road safety it is very important that resources are prioritised to the areas of greatest need. In order to consider this request further, the Council will undertake a review to determine the feasibility of facilities to aid pedestrians at this location, starting with a traffic survey at a time of normal traffic patterns to record traffic speeds and flows. Any design for improvements that is prepared would only proceed once funding is available.
Opposing double yellow lines in Bush Road, Cuxton	Due to concerns raised by residents regarding inadequate visibility at the junction of The Glebe and Bush Road and the mostly positive informal consultation responses, parking restrictions would be implemented in line with national guidance. In Bush Road there would be 15 metres of double yellow lines to the left of the junction and 25 metres to the right, extending to the existing Bus Clearway. A shorter restriction of 5 metres, as proposed by the petition, would still result in impaired visibility for motorists and pedestrians. Although the scheme would restrict parking outside two properties in Bush Road, both have access to off-street parking spaces. The double yellow lines would also extend 15 metres into The Glebe. The width of the junction enables vehicles to turn left at a considerable speed and a 5 metre restriction would not be suitable at this location for reasons of road safety. With regard to the parade of shops in Bush Road, the consultation highlighted that

<b>Subject of petition</b>	<b>Response</b>
	the proposed disabled bay and associated dropped kerb would be of great value and this will be implemented as shown on the consultation plans. There are no other plans to install double yellow lines in Cuxton at this time.
Objection to the proposed introduction of double yellow lines between 70a – 82 High St, Halling	As a result of objections received, including this petition, the scheme will be put on hold and discussed with the Ward Councillor after the local elections. Residents will be notified of the decision.
Request for parking restrictions outside business premises from 118-130A Maidstone Road, Rochester	Following site visits by officers from the integrated transport team, a proposed scheme to introduce limited waiting restrictions in the existing parking bays outside the premises from 118 to 130A Maidstone Road would be discussed with the Ward Councillor for the area. If the scheme received approval from Councillors, a consultation process would be instigated.
Opposition to developments of the countryside in Rainham North, especially on Mill Hill	The Council, as the Local Planning Authority, is currently preparing a new Local Plan for the period to 2035 which will identify sites to accommodate the area's significant housing need. All sites put forward by landowners and developers (including Mill Hill) will be assessed against sustainable criteria. Until the Local Plan is agreed, any planning application submitted for the development of Mill Hill would be assessed against the current Development Plan, taking account of all other material planning considerations, including National Planning Policy. The Local Plan process and any planning application received would be the subject of extensive consultation and all comments received would be carefully considered.
Request to convert Albany Road, Gillingham into a one way road	Investigations had shown that there were no personal injury accidents in Albany Road in the 3 year period to January 2015. In addition, the implementation of one-way traffic in this minor residential road would create problems by transferring traffic movements to other parts of the highway network. It could also result in increased speeds and potential conflicts unless traffic calming measures were also introduced. As such, the proposal would not provide the safety or network management benefits required for progression at this stage.

<b>Subject of petition</b>	<b>Response</b>
To help stop bin raiders in the Medway area	Since receiving the petition, Medway Council had been working with Kent Police to address the problem. Joint operations involving Community Wardens and the Environmental Enforcement and Licensing departments had resulted in people being stopped and vehicles prohibited from use. Drivers had been issued with summonses for various offences and the documents of metal collectors had been checked. These operations would continue while the problem remained.

#### **4. Petitions referred to this committee**

- 4.1 A petition objecting to the withdrawal of buses 181 and 701 affecting the Walderslade Road area of Walderslade has recently been received and forwarded to Arriva for consideration. The lead petitioner has requested that the matter be referred to this Committee and it will be reviewed by the Committee at its meeting on 29 September 2015.

#### **5. Risk Management**

- 5.1 The Council has a clear scheme for handling petitions set out in its Constitution. This ensures consistency and clarity of process, minimising the risk of complaints about the administration of petitions.

#### **6. Financial and Legal Implications**

- 6.1 Any financial implications arising from the issues raised by the petitions are set out in the comments on the petitions.
- 6.2 Overview and Scrutiny Rule 22.1 (xiv) in the Council's Constitution provides that the terms of reference of this Committee include the power to deal with petitions referred to the Committee under and in accordance with the Council's petition scheme.

#### **7. Recommendation**

- 7.1 The Committee is requested note the petition responses and appropriate officer actions in paragraph 3 of the report.

#### **Lead officer contact**

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#### **Appendices**

None

## **Background papers**

None