

REGENERATION, CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

16 JUNE 2016

PETITIONS

Report from: Richard Hicks, Director, Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation

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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 the lead 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 Committees 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/pdf/4.01%20-Council%20rules.pdf>
- 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.
- 2.3 For petitions where the petitioner organiser is not satisfied with the response provided by the Director there is provision for the petition organiser to request that the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee review the steps the Council has taken, or is proposing to take, in response to the petition.

3 Completed petitions

- 3.1 A summary of responses to petitions relevant to this Committee that have been accepted by the petition organisers is set out below.

Subject of petition	Response
Petition to rebuild the pathways through Medway City Estate to include cycle lanes	Following a recent successful bid for funding for regeneration schemes, a local growth fund project to improve pedestrian, cyclist and traffic links through Medway City Estate is in the early stages of development. Cycle links are a high priority and improvements would be implemented by 2018.
Petition to reinstate the fixed speed camera on the A228 in Frindsbury Hill between Parsonage Road and the Sans Pareil roundabout to restrict the speed of travel of vehicles using the road in both directions	The Kent and Medway Safety Camera Partnership (KMSCP) and its partners manage the deployment of safety cameras in the interests of casualty reduction throughout Kent and Medway. All concerns for safety are taken seriously and the Council acts to improve and promote road safety wherever possible. It is intended to replace the speed camera at Frindsbury Hill as part of an ongoing project that will see safety cameras throughout the county upgraded to current digital technologies. The replacement of this camera site is supported by Strood Rural Ward Members and the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services. The project is being delivered via the Kent and Medway Safety Partnership and upgrades should begin this year. In addition, an interim solution at Frindsbury Hill is being sought prior to the wholesale upgrade of the equipment.

4. Petitions not yet concluded

- 4.1 Responses have been sent to the lead petitioners for the following petitions. If a request to refer any of these petitions to this Committee is received in line with the Council's petitions scheme, it will be referred back to the next meeting.

Subject of petition	Response
<p>Petition to increase the level of parking provision in Perry Street, Chatham by using some of the spare public land for converting this to additional car parking spaces for residents use.</p>	<p>Ever increasing car ownership levels create the majority of issues, with existing roads under pressure from the amount of cars now using the road network in Medway. When previous requests have been investigated, the cost of providing additional parking has proved too high. There is considerable pressure on the Council's budgets and initial observations would indicate the costs of such a scheme would be prohibitive in the current financial climate and would not therefore be progressed.</p>
<p>Petition to remove the current parking restrictions on Doust Way, Rochester, as they are unnecessary since the train station has now moved. The area is a regeneration area and has been deserted by walkers, joggers and regular visitors due to excessive parking restrictions.</p>	<p>These restrictions were implemented following requests from residents. After extensive consultation the restrictions were installed in December 2015. Their removal would only result in the same problems being experienced with the parking of vehicles along the road. Following a site meeting with Ward Councillors, it was agreed to reduce part of the double yellow lines and amend to single yellow lines where the parking bay has not yet been fully constructed. All other restrictions would remain as installed. Statutory consultation will be carried out in the next few months after which the amendment will be carried out, subject to no objections being received.</p>

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 21.1 (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 to note the petition responses and appropriate officer actions in paragraphs 3 and 4 of the report.

Lead officer contact

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Appendices:

None

Background papers:

None