

REGENERATION, CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

28 MARCH 2017

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 petition organisers by officers.

The Committee is requested to consider the petition referral request.

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 or policy 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
<p>Requesting amendments to the proposed parking restrictions in Napier Road, Gillingham</p> <p>15 signatures</p>	<p>The petition would be included in the formal report collating all of the comments received during the public consultation period, and this will be considered as part of the process. Following a subsequent site meeting with the petition organiser, the revised double yellow line extent was agreed.</p>
<p>Requesting the installation of a loading bay for the Essentials Shop, Canterbury Street, Gillingham between 8am - 10pm seven days a week</p> <p>55 signatures</p>	<p>Officers from Integrated Transport met with local Ward Councillors together with a representative from the shop. A compromise was discussed involving a shared use bay proposal 8am-6pm Monday to Saturday: loading only 8am-10am/4pm-6pm and in between 10am to 4pm limited waiting of 1 hour with no return within 2 hours. Arrangements would be made for public consultation on this proposal to take place in March 2017.</p>
<p>To improve the road safety in the area of Pattens Lane/ Wilson Avenue, Gillingham</p> <p>71 signatures</p>	<p>The Council introduces road safety measures on the basis of casualty reduction and locations recording an ongoing poor road casualty history are tackled first, in order to help prevent further casualties on Medway's roads. Personal injury collision information is continuously monitored to identify areas of increased injury risk. Three slight injury collisions, none involving pedestrians, were recorded in the area in question during the last three years of available Police records.</p> <p>Raised features such as speed bumps are typically used to maintain slow moving traffic rather than slow down fast moving traffic so a longer length of road is typically required. The significant investment needed for such</p>

Subject of petition	Response
	<p>measures would mean, regrettably, they would not be supportable at this location at present when taking into account other locations suffering significantly poorer casualty records throughout Medway.</p> <p>Other improvements at this junction may be possible and Safety Engineers would investigate this with a view to any identified appropriate improvements being put forward for consideration during the 2017/18 financial year</p>

4. Petitions not yet concluded

- 4.1 With the exception of the final petition in the table below, a holding response has been sent to the organisers of the petitions. If, once final responses have been sent, any requests to refer petitions to this Committee are received in line with the Council's petitions scheme, they will be included in the report to the next meeting.

Subject of petition	Response
<p>Objecting to the Proposed Control Parking Zone in Hone Street, North Strood</p> <p>36 signatures</p>	<p>Officers from Integrated Transport will meet with Ward Councillors and the Portfolio Holder to discuss the issues raised by residents. Once this discussion has taken place, the petitioner organiser would be contacted.</p>
<p>Objecting to the Proposed Controlled Parking Zone outside Prospect Hair Design and Bill St Barbers in Strood North</p> <p>82 signatures</p>	<p>Officers from Integrated Transport will meet with Ward Councillors and the Portfolio Holder to discuss the issues raised by residents. Once this discussion has taken place, the petitioner organiser would be contacted.</p>
<p>Objecting to the Proposed Controlled Parking Zone in Ravenswood Avenue, Strood North</p> <p>61 signatures</p>	<p>Officers from Integrated Transport will meet with Ward Councillors and the Portfolio Holder to discuss the issues raised by residents. Once this discussion has taken place, the petitioner organiser would be contacted.</p>
<p>Objecting to the Proposed Control Parking Zone within the vicinity of Vanity Flair Nails and Beauty, Weston Road and Bryant</p>	<p>Officers from Integrated Transport will meet with Ward Councillors and the Portfolio Holder to discuss the issues raised by residents. Once this discussion has taken place, the petitioner organiser would be contacted.</p>

Subject of petition	Response
Road, Strood North 53 signatures	
Supporting the proposals of double yellow lines on the junction of Birch Grove and Plumtree Grove Hempstead 22 signatures	The petition will be considered with the consultation responses and included in a formal consultation report for consideration by Ward Councillors and the Portfolio Holder. Once the issues have been discussed with Ward Councillors and the Portfolio Holder, the petition organiser would be contacted.
Objecting to the proposed implementation of a controlled parking zone in Kitchener Road, Strood North 35 signatures	Officers from Integrated Transport Service will meet with Ward Councillors and the Portfolio Holder in due course to discuss the issues raised. Once this discussion has taken place, the petitioner organiser would be contacted.
Improve street lighting at the end of Holmside, Gillingham 14 signatures	<p>A new lighting scheme was installed in Holmside in 2007 and conformed to the British Standard at that time. Some columns were removed and repositioned to ensure a good spread of lighting throughout the road. Originally there was one street light outside 69/71 and one outside 64/66 but the modern lanterns used in Holmside reduced the need for two lights and the street light outside 69/71 was removed. The area to the side of 79 Holmside is a private area and is therefore not lit by Medway Council, although there is a street light opposite which does provide some light to this area.</p> <p>The street lighting in Holmside is considered to be to a high standard and there are currently no plans to improve the lighting further or to replace the street light originally positioned outside 69/71.</p>

5. Petitions referred to this Committee

- 5.1 The following petition has been referred to this Committee because the petitioner organiser has indicated that they are dissatisfied with the response received from the Director.

5.2 Consideration of arrangements for residential parking in and around Southwell Road, Strood

5.3 This petition, containing 73 signatures, was presented by Councillor Joy. The petition states:

“We, the undersigned residents representing households in Southwell Road; Lincoln Close; Carlisle Close; Guildford Gardens; Peterborough Gardens and St Albans Road, petition the Council to investigate and review parking arrangements in and around Southwell Road and its service roads.

In the interests of the safety of all residents and their children we would like to see implemented either new hard standing for parking and/or a residents parking scheme. The roads in the area are obstructed by poorly parked vehicles, particularly so in the evening and at weekends.

The availability of parking space is also reduced by the number of commercial vehicles parked in the area. Residents are frequently forced to walk in the road. Often the elderly and young mothers, among others, are unable to use the pavement because vehicles are partially or completely parked on the pavements. Furthermore, with the parking as it is, there is little or no access for Emergency vehicles.”

5.4 The Director of Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation responded to the petitioner organiser on 6 February 2017 as follows:

“When an enquiry involves a request for further parking restrictions, this can cause many differing views to be expressed. Proposals for change are subject to legal process and public consultation, to ensure that all affected residents have the opportunity to express their views on the proposals.

Residents parking schemes are considered when there are major attractor locations such as railway stations, hospitals or University halls of residence. In the current financial climate, and as this location does not have any of the above mentioned attractors in the area, we are unfortunately not able to progress your request further at this time.”

5.5 On 21 February 2017, the petitioner organiser requested that the matter be reviewed by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The email stated:

“Our local residents' association discussed your reply to our petition last Sunday. We are collectively of the opinion that we would like this petition to go to a Scrutiny Committee.

We are concerned that the parking down Southwell Road and its feeder roads is unsafe. As our original petition stated, the elderly, the disabled and young mothers with children in buggies/pushchairs are left with no option but to walk in the road.

We are particularly concerned that in the near future there is likely to be an accident in this area when remedial action would be seen by our residents as too little being done too late.

Attached are a few photographs some take during the day and others taken at night of the parking down our road. The night time photos were taken on Monday 20 February.”

5.6 The Director has further commented as follows:

“The concerns of residents have been noted and as a result the road safety team will review the accident statistics for the area to see if there is a serious road safety risk. If there is, all possible interventions will be investigated along with the necessary funding required albeit there are limited resources available.”

6. Risk Management

6.1 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.

7. Financial and Legal Implications

7.1 Any financial implications arising from the issues raised by the petitions are set out in the comments on the petitions.

7.2 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.

8. Recommendation

8.1 The Committee is requested to note the petition responses and appropriate officer actions in paragraphs 3 and 4 of the report.

8.2 The Committee is requested to consider the petition referral request and the Director's comments at paragraph 5 of the report.

Lead officer contact

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Appendices:

Appendix A – Copies of photographs submitted with the request for the petition for residential parking in and around Southwell Road, Strood to be considered by the committee.

Background papers:

None