

REGENERATION, CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

28 MARCH 2018

PETITIONS

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

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 the petition organisers by officers.

1. Budget and policy framework

- 1.1 In summary, the Council's Petition Scheme requires the relevant Director to respond to the petition organiser, 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 petition 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 the response to a petition relevant to this Committee that has been accepted by the petition organiser is set out below.

Subject of petition	Response
<p>Say no to the Coach park on the Esplanade</p> <p>138 signatories</p> <p>Please note: An e-petition on this subject, containing 2270 signatures, was also received and the same response has been sent. At the time of writing, no request to refer the e-petition to this Committee has been received.</p>	<p>The Esplanade Gardens option is no longer being considered. Having investigated 36 possible sites over the past two years the intention remains to find a site that will keep the coach park in Rochester, but this is still under review and further work is being undertaken before a final decision is made.</p>
<p>Take appropriate urgent action to improve the road safety on Wayfield Road - many local residents are concerned about current levels of safety</p> <p>42 signatories</p>	<p>The Council receives many requests for speed reduction measures and each request is carefully considered on the basis of casualty reduction with locations already recording an ongoing poor road casualty history being tackled first, in order to help prevent further casualties on our roads.</p> <p>At this location a number of slight injury collisions have been recorded and it will be subject to safety investigations this year and the lead petitioner will be contacted once these have taken place. In addition the location has been added to the schedule of attendance by the Council's Speed Indicating Device (SID). This is a battery powered, interactive sign that is temporarily erected on site to help highlight any excess speeds to road users.</p>

4 **Petition not yet concluded**

- 4.1 A response has been sent to the lead petitioner for the following petition. If a request to refer a petition to this Committee is received, it will be referred to the next meeting.

Subject of petition	Summary of response
Put speed bumps or some form of traffic control all the way down Carnation Road, Strood, to stop people speeding and damaging other cars 8 signatories (e-petition)	<p>The Council receives many requests for speed reduction measures and each request is carefully considered on the basis of casualty reduction with locations already recording an ongoing poor road casualty history being tackled first, in order to help prevent further casualties on our roads.</p> <p>Three slight injury collisions have been recorded throughout Carnation Road during the last three years. With many other locations recording ongoing poorer road casualty records, we are unable to propose alterations on casualty reduction grounds at this time.</p> <p>The location will be added to the schedule of attendance by the Council's Speed Indicating Device (SID). In addition, any concerns about speeding and dangerous road users can be reported to Kent Police in order that consideration may be given to Police enforcement. The Police also operate a community based deterrent to speeding road users via their Speed Watch initiative.</p>

5. **Petition referred to this Committee**

- 5.1 The following petition has been referred to this Committee because the petitioner organiser, has indicated that she is dissatisfied with the response received.

5.2 Petition against anti-social parking at the bottom of Ordnance Street, Chatham

- 5.3 Two petitions, a paper petition containing 44 signatures and an e-petition containing 16 signatures, were received by the Council on 25 January 2018. The petition statement was as follows:

'We the undersigned petition the council to take appropriate urgent action to stop the antisocial parking at the bottom of Ordnance Street, Chatham. Many residents, particularly those with limited mobility, are concerned about the

anti-social parking taking place and urge the council to take appropriate steps.'

- 5.4 On 6 February the Director, Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive responded as follows:

'I would like to advise that my Parking Design team is aware of this location and the parking issues that occur. A site visit has been conducted and it has been determined that the best way forward to stop inconsiderate parking within this area would be to install further bollards to stop parking on the pavement which causes an obstruction to pedestrians, those with prams, wheelchair users and the visually impaired. My team has corresponded with a Ward Councillor concerning this issue and this location will be considered for a scheme within the new financial year.'

- 5.5 On 23 February 2018, the petition organiser requested that the matter be reviewed by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The request stated:

'Although the measurements listed are meant with good intent, I'm afraid that the time scale is not satisfactory to the needs of the residents. Therefore, I am requesting that the issue be reviewed by the overview and scrutiny committee at the earliest opportunity.'

- 5.6 In response, the Director, Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive has further commented as follows:

'It is our intention to place an order for the additional bollards within the first two weeks of the new financial year. The installation will then be discussed with the Council's contractor, with a view to undertaking the work as soon as possible.'

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 response and appropriate officer action 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.

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Appendices:

None

Background papers:

None