

REGENERATION, COMMUNITY AND CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

18 MARCH 2010

PETITIONS

Report from: Robin Cooper, Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture

Author: Caroline Salisbury, Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinator

Summary

This report advises the Committee of the petitions presented to the Mayor at Council meetings including a summary of officer's response to the petitioners.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

1.1 The constitution provides that petitions presented at Council meetings 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. Background

2.1 Where the Director is able to fully meet the request of the petitioners a response is sent of 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.

2.2 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. Petitions

3.1 A summary of responses relevant to this Committee that have passed the ten day deadline for a request for referral to the Committee and are therefore seen as acceptable to the petitioners are set out below.

| Subject of petition | Council Date Presented by | Response |
|--|---|--|
| Change the evening timing of car park charges at the Riverside long stay car park from 10pm to 7pm | Councillor Maple on behalf of Councillor Esterson | To bring all car parks in line with each other to ensure consistency across Medway, evening charging was introduced at a number of locations following Cabinet approval in September 2007. Following a recent review of other local authorities, Medway remains one of the lowest charging authorities throughout Kent and the car parks kept to a high standard and remain free of charge between 10pm and 7am. |

4 Update on previous petition referrals – Station Road, Rainham

- 4.1 The committee considered a petition referral on 2 December 2009 requesting traffic calming and speed restrictions in Station Road, Rainham and inappropriate late night driving in the car park.
- 4.2 After a slideshow presentation from the lead petitioner and responses from officers, the committee agreed:
- (a) to ask officers to consider traffic calming solutions in up to three locations in the section of Station Road, Rainham north of the railway line;
 - (b) that any suitable solutions and costs are submitted to the committee;
 - (c) that a solution is devised and reported back in relation to the problems in Station Road car park;
 - (d) to request officers to consider setting up a Station Road PACT group.
- 4.3 Officers are now reporting back to the committee with the following update.
- 4.4 Engineers will be visiting the site week commencing 8 March 2010 to undertake a feasibility study of introducing up to three raised table junctions north of the rail crossing. The viability of introducing the tables and their relative benefit will be considered as part of their report.
- 4.5 The car parking measures have now been introduced.

5 Update on previous petition referrals – Station Road, Strood

- 5.1 The committee considered a petition referral on 13 January 2010 requesting traffic calming and speed restrictions in Station Road, Strood following two deaths last year.
- 5.2 After hearing from the lead petitioner and officers, The committee agreed to:
 - (a) note the comments of the Director, officers and lead petitioner;
 - (b) ask the Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture to contact Kent Police about the possibility of limited early disclosure on accident reports;
 - (c) request that officers report back to committee with the causes and reasons for the accident resulting in two deaths in Station Road, Strood in 2009, together with ideas for any improvements at that stage.
- 5.3 Officers are now reporting back to the committee with the following update.
- 5.4 A letter of response has been received from Kent Police regarding decisions (b) and (c) above and this has been attached as appendix A. The council has not yet received a response from Kent Police regarding the causation of the fatal accident.
- 5.5 A further speed survey has been arranged and the council is awaiting results from contractor.
- 5.6 With regard to engineering measures, traffic calming across Medway is introduced when a pattern of accidents with similar causation factors has been identified. It is not introduced for isolated cases. Engineers can look at this site and propose solutions and costs. However, as a consequence of this action, the delivery of casualty reduction schemes with a higher priority will be affected and this in turn may be reflected in the outcome for the Local Transport Plan objectives.
- 5.7 A Ward Member queried the accuracy of the traffic data supplied directly to him in November 2009 and the information contained in the petition report considered on 13 January 2010. Having reviewed the data, it is apparent that a mistake was made in the data provided in November 2009 with regard to the 85th percentile speed. Officers wish to confirm that the 85th percentile uphill speed (northwest direction) should have been 33mph and not 28mph (this was the 50th percentile speed in the adjacent column and the 85th percentile downhill (southeast direction) speed is still 31.5mph.

6 Financial and Legal Implications

6.1 Any financial and/or legal implications arising from the issues raised by the petitions are set out in the comments on the petitions.

7 Recommendation

7.1 Members are requested to:

- (a) note the petition response and appropriate officer action in paragraph 3 of the report;
- (b) consider the updated information shown at paragraph 4 of the report.

Background papers

None

Contact for further details:

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MEMORANDUM



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E-mail to PC Omeara, PS Carron Medway
Copy to Bryan Shawyer, David Warner Medway Council
Sent 11/08/2009
Reference 223/TC/9958/09

Good Morning

On Monday 10th August 2009 I attended a site meeting with David Warner and Bryan Shawyer, from Medway Council, to consider what measures should be introduced on Station Road Strood following the fatal collision on 26th July 2009. It should be noted that although a fatal collision is a traumatic event for all those associated with it and obviously receives a lot of publicity when considering whether engineering measures are appropriate the crash history for the road over the last 3 or 5 years must be considered to establish if there is a pattern of crashes that could be reduced by suitable engineering measures. I am unable to comment of the details of the collision on the 26th as the investigation is ongoing.

The B2002 Station Road Strood carries a high volume of traffic and is a distributor road providing a through route from Frindsbury to Rochester. Due to the change in layout at the junction with the High Street through traffic can also access the A228 towards Cuxton and the M2.

Medway Council compile statistics on injury crashes on all roads within their area and informed me that there had been 2 injury collisions on Station Road in the last 3 years. Statistically this is a good record for this type of road.

Due to the distributor function of the road it would not be appropriate to place physical traffic calming measures such as road humps, chicanes etc along the road. The Department for Transport issues guidance on the introduction of 20 mph speed limits or 20 mph zones. These would normally be introduced across an area along with traffic calming measures to ensure that the limit was self enforcing. Kent Police would not enforce a 20 mph limit so there must be sufficient features to regulate traffic speeds, this means that a reduction in the speed limit is not appropriate.

We looked at the uncontrolled crossing points along Station Road and noted that due to the gradient of the road it would not be possible to make them easier to use for pedestrians, particularly those with restricted mobility. We noted the trees in the gardens, which would improve visibility if they were removed, but as they are on private property and do not overhang the highway boundary Medway Council have no legal authority to cut the trees or order the owner to do so. They agreed to contact the owner of the properties to see if they would consider cutting the trees on a voluntary basis.

The safest and most suitable place to cross the road is at the pelican crossing. You say that residents are reluctant to use this due to fear of the subway and brambles sticking out from Network Rail property. Medway Council will be contacting Network Rail to arrange for them

to cut back any vegetation that overhangs the footway and I am sure that you will be able to provide a lot more information regarding the crime risks of the area than I can. I agree that the footway is narrow in places but there is insufficient room to widen it and it still provides a reasonable route to the best crossing point.

I realise that the local residents would have hoped for more action however decisions cannot be taken on what may be an isolated incident. I am happy to meet to explain these decisions if you want or if I am able to assist in any other way please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards
Paul Cave
PC 7981

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