

## **REGENERATION, CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**15 AUGUST 2019**

### **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:

<https://www.medway.gov.uk/downloads/file/2657/401 - council rules>

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 petitions relevant to this Committee that have been accepted by the petition organisers are set out below.

Subject of petition	Summary of response
<p>Petition the Council to improve road safety around Lambourn Way, Knole Road and the surrounding roads in Chatham, in particular recognising the road safety pressures of the local school.</p> <p>17 signatures (paper petition)</p>	<p>The Council visits schools across Medway, including St.Benedicts School, to encourage alternative means of travel. Many schools have Travel Plans which discourage travelling by car. St.Benedicts School have been encouraged to operate a 'Walking Bus' and this year Council officers have delivered various initiatives at the school including Bikeability and scooter skills. The school has also issued notes to parents and visitors to ask them to park considerately.</p> <p>The inconsiderate parking creates a single available lane through the centre of Lambourn Way and this is more effective 'traffic calming' than would be created by road humps albeit at school times. A traffic count and speed survey showed that volume increased to a few hundred vehicles in the busiest hours and most speeds were below the 30mph limit. Traffic calming would therefore be extreme action.</p> <p>Expenditure on road safety measures is directed to those places with an on-going pattern of injuries and there are many roads which have an even greater priority than Lambourn Way.</p> <p>'White bar' marks could be painted in front of driveways on Lambourn Road nearest the school and, although not formal parking restrictions, would discourage parking in front of accesses. In addition 'SLOW' could be painted next to the 'Patrol' warning signs and a white centre line marking at the junction with Knole Road to highlight the junction. Also, a temporary portable Speed Indicator Device is scheduled to be installed at Lambourn Way in October before the half term holiday.</p>

<b>Subject of petition</b>	<b>Summary of response</b>
<p>Petition the Council to implement traffic studies, due to a substantial increase in through traffic between Maidstone Road and Delce Road, which has made Rochester Avenue a 'rat run'. Introduce further traffic calming measures and signage to reduce traffic volumes and deter speeding, thus increasing pedestrian safety.</p> <p>205 signatures (paper petition)</p>	<p>A traffic survey in June showed that over two thirds of the traffic in Rochester Avenue is through traffic. Most vehicles were found to be travelling around 30mph or just below.</p> <p>Road Safety measures are directed to those places with an on-going pattern of injuries. There were no reported incidents where someone was injured in the past three years. There were accidents at each end of Rochester Avenue but these do not appear to have been preventable by the application of further speed restraint measures. Therefore other locations in Medway with a poorer safety record would receive a much higher priority for the introduction of safety measures than Rochester Avenue. Installing road humps where properties are located so close to the road would not be appropriate.</p> <p>A temporary portable Speed Indicator Device is scheduled to be installed at Rochester Avenue in late September or early October.</p>
<p>Petition to reduce double yellow lines and increase parking for residents of Borstal Street.</p> <p>16 signatures (paper petition)</p>	<p>The Parking Design team conducted a site visit and advised that reducing the double yellow lines and extending the permit bays will cause obstruction to vehicles exiting the junction opposite and reduce the accessibility to traffic flow, including buses.</p> <p>Reducing the double yellow lines on Nashenden Lane towards the junction is not possible due to the narrow width of the road. Mounting the pavement to park cannot be encouraged as it causes an obstruction for pedestrians, wheel chair users, prams and emergency vehicles. One side of this road is partially unrestricted which allows for parking.</p> <p>If the double yellow lines were to be reduced outside the shops at this location this would allow parking both sides of the carriage way, this would restrict the traffic flow in the road which is a part of a main bus route.</p> <p>Reducing the double yellow lines outside the entrances to the flats opposite the shops would not be possible for the same reason. The double yellow lines have been implemented on both</p>

<b>Subject of petition</b>	<b>Summary of response</b>
	sides of the carriage way in staggered stages to discourage parallel parking both sides to help with continuous traffic flow and to also to act as a traffic calming measure.
<p>Petition the Council to provide residents with general waste wheelie bins to stop the mess on the streets from black sacks.</p> <p>128 signatures (e-petition)</p>	<p>The Council's refuse collection fleets are not fitted with bin lifting mechanisms, so are unable to lift and empty wheelie bins at this time. The existing fleet will not be replaced until post 2021 and before this, a review will be conducted on the most suitable containers for the majority of Medway residents.</p> <p>Due to the old Victorian-style terraced houses, hillside and long alleyway collections, there are a significant number of households in Medway that are not suitable for wheeled bins or can only support one wheeled bin.</p> <p>The garden and food waste service is the only wheeled bin collection as this offers the best containment for the food waste items that attract animals. Depositing food in brown garden bins, either in caddy liners or wrapped in newspaper, significantly reduces the likelihood of foxes targeting black sacks and also significantly reduces the amount of waste in them.</p> <p>Waste can be stored on residents' own property during the week in any container of their choosing. However, all black sacks must be presented out of the bin on the boundary of the property by 7am on the morning of collection.</p>
<p>Petition the Council to take action to enforce the 7.5 tonne weight limit on Bells Lane Hoo.</p> <p>119 signatures (paper petition)</p>	<p>The Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) in place does not apply to Large Goods Vehicles accessing Bells Lane as the end destination and permits access for the purposes of making deliveries to and from premises in Hoo, including the Marina.</p> <p>The Council enforces TROs related to parking and waiting restrictions. However, the Police are responsible for the enforcement of orders related to 'moving traffic' and this includes the enforcement of weight restrictions which would require the Police to speak with the driver to establish the purpose of their journey.</p> <p>The Council will contact the Police to make them</p>

Subject of petition	Summary of response
	aware of residents' concerns and will continue to monitor the accident record on Bells Lane.

#### 4. Petitions not yet concluded:

- 4.1 Initial or final responses have been sent to the petition organiser for the following petitions. If a request is received to refer any of the petitions to this Committee for review, they may be referred to the next meeting.

Subject of petition	Summary of response
<p>Petition the Council to address the speeding traffic issues on First Avenue and consider the introduction of road safety measures.</p> <p>62 signatures (paper petition)</p>	<p>The Road Safety Team will carry out traffic surveys and observations so that consideration can be given to the measured speed of traffic and any road safety issues. If appropriate, suitable options to reduce the problem will be examined, based upon the observations and associated investigations.</p> <p>Feedback will be provided to the Lead Petitioner.</p>
<p>Petition the Council to take action against vehicular access to Beechings Playing Fields by installing a height barrier and any other suitable barriers needed to prevent vehicular access, due to continuous incursions after the preventative works.</p> <p>156 signatures (paper petition) and 181 signatures (e-petition)</p>	<p>The Council has worked with its partners Medway Norse, to ensure the perimeter of the playing fields has been made secure. Hooped barriers had been placed across the previously open greenspace border with the highway. Additional work has been carried out, with a protective 'box cover' installed to protect the padlock, which has also been replaced with a steel padlock. In addition, a drop bollard (and steel padlock) has been installed as extra protection to the site. The Council's experience is that height barriers have not made sites more secure; there have been incursions at sites such as Medway Park, for example. There are times when height barriers need to be kept open to let maintenance vehicles access the site, as well as emergency vehicles, and as such they are not always an effective means of preventing entry.</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 will be taken into account as part of the review of these matters.
- 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. Recommendations**

- 7.1 The Committee is requested to note the petition responses and appropriate officer action in paragraphs 3 and 4 of the report.

### **Lead officer contact**

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### **Appendices:**

None

### **Background papers:**

None