

REGENERATION, CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

17 OCTOBER 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. Petition not yet concluded:

A response has been sent to the petition organiser for the following petition. If a request is received to refer the petition to this Committee for review, it may be referred to the next meeting.

Subject of petition	Summary of response
Petition against building on Sturry Park, Twydall 210 signatures (paper petition)	<p>The Council understands the concerns raised by residents in the local area in relation to potential development at Sturry Way Park in Twydall, but there is also a need to consider other Medway residents who may not have accommodation of their own or who are living in accommodation that is unsuitable. The Council faces considerable pressure in relation to housing need and is actively exploring how to increase the supply of Council-owned rented homes. Consideration is being given to a number of sites that were recently brought forward for consultation with the local community, comprising both green spaces and garage sites.</p> <p>Following feedback from local residents, the plans for Sturry Park (originally 20 x 2 bedroom houses, retaining some green space and the play area) have been revised. A scheme that retains the park, a greater proportion of green space and provides a lower density development will be submitted through the Council's planning process for consideration.</p>

4. Risk Management

- 4.1 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.

5. Financial and Legal Implications

- 5.1 Any financial implications arising from the issues raised by the petitions will be taken into account as part of the review of these matters.

5.2 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.

6. Recommendations

6.1 The Committee is requested to note the petition response in paragraph 3 of the report.

Lead officer contact

Steve Platt, Democratic Services Officer, (01634) 332011
stephen.platt@medway.gov.uk

Appendices:

None

Background papers:

None