

# **Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**13 June 2024**

## **Petitions Report**

Report from: Adam Bryan, Director of Place

Author: Steve Dickens, Democratic Services Officer

### **Summary**

This report advises the Committee of petitions received by the Council which fall within the remit of this Committee including a summary of the responses sent to the petition organisers by officers.

#### **1. Recommendations**

1.1. The Committee is requested to note the petition responses and appropriate officer actions in paragraph 4.1 of the report.

#### **2. Budget and policy framework**

2.1. 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.

2.2. The petition scheme is set out in full in the Council's Constitution at [Council rules](#).

2.3. Any budget or policy framework implications will be set out in the specific petition response.

### 3. Background

- 3.1. 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.
- 3.2. 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.
- 3.3. 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.

### 4. Completed Petitions

- 4.1. The response to petitions relevant to this Committee that has been accepted by the petition organiser, with no request for referral to this Committee, are set out below.

<b>Subject of petition</b>	<b>Summary of Medway Council's response</b>
Mitigate the effects of the road closure on A228 Frindsbury Hill.	<p>The decision to close Frindsbury Hill was not one which was taken lightly. Lengthy and frequent meetings took place with Council officers and the developer for the school to consider all potential traffic management options so that the school could successfully open in September 2024. The closure was, in the view of the Council, the only viable option as it offered the shortest possible timeframe of disruption.</p> <p>Driver behaviour when faced with a road closure is to utilise the main diversion route or use local knowledge to travel to their destination. To date, 7 days into the closure, this appears to be working well, with only very few issues encountered.</p> <p>We are providing regular updates to Members and on our social media and actively promoting that businesses are open as usual to assist with reducing the impact these works might have on them.</p> <p>The Bus Operators were involved during early discussions; inviting them to meetings that have been held and therefore they have been kept fully informed of the proposed programme of works. This has enabled them to review their operations and provide alternative travel solutions for members of the public.</p>

	<p>Officers are holding weekly progress meetings with the developer, focusing on ensuring the highway works are carried out as quickly as possible so that the closure can be removed, and the road re-opened. The developer is also able to utilise weekend working if they can divert resources to also try to bring this project in ahead of time. Officers will continue to mitigate the situation by working closely with the developer and Education colleagues to try and re-open the road at the earliest opportunity.</p>
<p>New pedestrian crossing near the Bridgewood Roundabout, Maidstone Road, Chatham</p>	<p>The Council very much supports and promotes sustainable travel, and we work to make our roads as safe as possible for all users. The Council's engineers and officers will undertake a review to consider the concept of a crossing facility at this location in the current financial year. This assessment will consider a number of factors, such as: pedestrian activity in the area, the local safety history, visibility, impact on traffic flow, along with any road layout or physical constraints. We will also consider the availability of funding to support any changes at this location. The Transport and Parking Team will aim to update you within the next six months.</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 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. Actions referred to in the officer responses which are not within existing budgets, and any further activity, would require Cabinet and Council approval for budgetary additions if funding was available.

## 7. Legal implication

- 7.1. 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.

## Lead officer contact

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Appendices

None

Background papers

None