

REGENERATION, COMMUNITY AND CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4 OCTOBER 2011

PETITIONS

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

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Summary

This report advises the Committee of the petitions presented at Council meetings, received by the council or sent via the e-petition facility, including a summary of officer's response to the petitioners.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

1.1 The 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. Background

2.1 The Director is asked to respond to the petition request within 10 working days. 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 If the petition contains at least the number of signatures equating to 5% of Medway's population (currently 12,675 signatures) it will be debated by Full Council unless it is a petition asking for a senior council officer to give evidence at a public meeting.

2.3 If the petition contains at least the number of signatures equating to 2% of Medway's population (currently 5,070 signatures) the relevant senior officer may give evidence at a public meeting of the relevant overview and scrutiny committee.

2.4 A petition may also be submitted through the e-petition facility on the council's website. E-petitions must follow the same guidelines as paper

petitions. A petition acknowledgement and response will be emailed to everyone who has signed the e-petition and elected to receive this information.

- 2.5 A summary of the response to all petitions will also be published on the council's website.

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	Date of receipt and all paper petitions (no e-petitions)	Response
Planning application MC/11/0941 - Petition setting out concerns for planning application re 124 High Street, Rainham	29 April 2011	Considered as part of planning application within planning timescales
Planning application MC/11/0898 - Petition to raise concerns about planning permission at Snodhurst Car Sales, 7 Snodhurst Avenue, Chatham, ME5 OSX. All petitioners strongly object to the erection of a telecommunications monopole and equipment box	3 May 2011	Considered as part of planning application within planning timescales
Planning application MC/11/1223 - Petition objecting to the application to convert 47a Luton High Street to a beauty salon	3 May 2011	Considered as part of planning application within planning timescales
Planning application MC/11/1210 - No objection at 313 High Street, Chatham	6 May 2011	Considered as part of planning application within planning timescales
Planning application MC/11/1224 - Petition objecting to proposed development - garden at 44 Amethyst Avenue, Horsted ME5 9TJ	11 May 2011	Considered as part of planning application within planning timescales
Complaint regarding installation of traffic calming measures, Borstal Road, Rochester	23 May 2011	As the speed cushions are all in accordance with the original planning condition and to the correct engineering specification there are neither good grounds for their removal nor the funds to do so.

Subject of petition	Date of receipt and all paper petitions (no e-petitions)	Response
Reinstate the frequency of buses to and from Heron Way, Princes Park	27 May 2011	Arriva provides this service without subsidy from the council and therefore the council is not in a position to influence Arriva's decision. Arriva informed officers that the decision to remove the service was made because passenger levels did not justify the level of service they were providing.
Sole Beauty – 47A High Street, Luton – Supporting planning application MC/11/1223	14 June 2011	Considered as part of planning application within planning timescales
Petition objecting to the increases to all allotment holders for their plots and also a new charge for the sheds on all plots	20 June 2011	Consultation on the increased charges took place with representatives of the Allotment Federation prior to being formally adopted as part of the budget setting process in February 2011.
Planning application MC/11/1598 - Petition objecting to telecommunications equipment at Burma Way Garages, Chatham	27 June 2011	Considered as part of planning application within planning timescales
Request to introduce speed calming measures to Hartington Street, Chatham	Council 21 July 2011	The incident history of the last 3 years has been investigated with one injury collision recorded. With other locations in Medway recording poorer safety records, and therefore a higher priority, this road is not possible for calming measures at this time.
Request to completely resurface the section of Rosebery Road between Parr Avenue and Medway Road, Gillingham	Council 21 July 2011	A site visit was carried out and a section of the road found to have some isolated areas of failure. Patching works will be carried out. Another section is already on the list for resurfacing works. However water meter replacement works are also scheduled and once this work has been carried out, plans can be made for this section to be resurfaced.

Subject of petition	Date of receipt and all paper petitions (no e-petitions)	Response
Request to install a salt grit bin on The Ridgeway and St Mary's Road, Gillingham	Council 21 July 2011	The location has been assessed and not found to meet the criteria for the placement of salt bins for highway purposes.
Planning application MC/11/1866 – Petition objecting to 33 St Albans Road, Strood	22 July 2011	Considered as part of planning application within planning timescales
Planning application MC/11/1460 – Petition objecting to construction of a canopy incorporating a small store at Walderslade Primary School, Dargets Road	27 July 2011	Considered as part of planning application within planning timescales
Planning application MC/11/1860 – Petition objecting to 572 Maidstone Road, Wigmore	31 July 2011	Considered as part of planning application within planning timescales
Request for a pedestrian crossing or other traffic calming in Wayfield Road, Chatham	3 August 2011	Following safety investigation, there are other locations recording poorer safety records and are therefore a higher priority for safety engineering improvements.
Planning application MC/11/1888 – Petition objecting to construction of 11 dwellings with parking at land between Medway Road and Cumberland Road, Gillingham	11 August 2011	Considered as part of planning application within planning timescales
Request for traffic calming in Upper Stoke	12 August 2011	The incident history has been investigated with no injury collisions within the last 5 years. Other locations in Medway record poorer safety records, and are a higher priority.
The petitioners strongly oppose the unjustified, above inflation rise in plot rents and the imposition of £15 rent for concrete sheds without proper 12 months notice at Street End Road Allotments	24 August 2011	The increase set for allotments was introduced to bring the level of subsidy in line with that for other recreational facilities and this action was taken under S10 of Allotments Act 1950. There are no statutory provisions requiring 12 months notice of rent increases. A schedule of repairs to sheds will commence within the next month.

Subject of petition	Date of receipt and all paper petitions (no e-petitions)	Response
Planning application MC/11/1437	8 September 2011	Considered as part of planning application within planning timescales
Planning applications MC/11/2039 and MC/11/1965 - Petition objecting to any re-development of King Street Car Park, King Street, Rochester	8 September 2011	Considered as part of planning application within planning timescales
Planning application MC/11/2058 - Petition objecting to 7 Canterbury Street, Gillingham	8 September 2011	Considered as part of planning application within planning timescales
General objection to development in Frindsbury – but no objection to restoration of The Barn, (Planning application MC/10/2068)	16 September 2011	Considered as part of planning application within planning timescales

4 Petitions referred to this committee

- 4.1 No lead petitioners have indicated that they are dissatisfied with the responses received.

5 Risk Management

- 5.1 The Council's petition scheme has been drafted in compliance with the minimum requirements of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 relating to petitions. This will minimise the risk of any challenge to the legitimacy of the Council's arrangements for handling petitions.

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 note the petition response and appropriate officer action in paragraph 3 of the report.

Background papers

Medway Council's Constitution
Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009

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