

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 June 2021 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr S Bartlett – Chairman
Cllr V Slade – Vice-Chairman

Present: Cllr L Allison, Cllr M Cox, Cllr L Dedman, Cllr B Dion, Cllr J Edwards,
Cllr L Fear, Cllr S Gabriel, Cllr D Kelsey, Cllr T O'Neill, Cllr C Rigby,
Cllr A Hadley (In place of Cllr M Howell) and Cllr T Trent (In place of
Cllr M Earl)

Also in attendance: Councillor Mark Anderson
Councillor Mike Greene
Councillor May Haines
Councillor Robert Lawton

30. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs M Earl, D Farr and M Howell.

31. Substitute Members

Cllr T Trent substituted for Cllr M Earl and Cllr A Hadley substituted for Cllr M Howell.

32. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest received.

33. Public Speaking

There were no public petitions or questions.

A Public Statement was received from a local resident in relation to agenda item 6 - Tree Management Across the BCP Area. The resident read his statement to the Board, a copy of which is appended to these minutes.

34. Forward Plan

This item was deferred from the meeting held earlier in the day. The Chairman outlined the items from the Cabinet Forward Plan which the Chairman and Vice-Chair had proposed for inclusion on the Board's Forward Plan. The items suggested were:

- Winter Gardens
- End of Year Performance Report
- Corporate Strategy

- Council Building and Acquisition Strategy
- Highway Inspections Programme
- BCP Local Plan Options Consultation

The Chairman open up the discussion to Board members and asked for any comments on the current Forward Plan. Suggestions were received to add items on the following to the Forward Plan:

- Review of the Multi-Partner Summer response plan
- Council's Digital Strategy

It was agreed to add both these items to the Forward Plan and consider an appropriate date for them. The Chairman also briefly outlined the proposed changes to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Structure which were under consideration.

RESOLVED: That the Board's Forward Plan be updated as outlined above.

35. Scrutiny of Transport and Sustainability Related Cabinet Reports

Council Fleet Replacement Programme & Sustainable Fleet Management Strategy – The Portfolio Holder for Transport and Sustainability and the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Cleansing and Waste introduced the report a copy of which had been circulated to members of the Board and a copy of which appears as Appendix A to these minutes in the minute book. The Portfolio Holders outlined the key issues within the report and responded to a number of issues raised by Board members in the subsequent discussion including:

- The environmental impact of the use of palm oil as part of the mix to be used for vehicles. The Portfolio Holder advised that unsustainable oils would not be used. All oils would be accredited and where waste oil was used it would, in all cases, be completely traceable.
- It was noted that hybrid fuel/ electric vehicles were in use in some boroughs for buses. Although the typical usage of buses would have an impact on their use there was consideration being given to the potential use of pure electric for some buses.
- A Board member commented that the “up to 90 percent” reduction in carbon monoxide emissions seemed both vague and at odds with a paper from 2018 which states that the changes being introduced would contribute a 30 percent reduction in emissions. The Portfolio Holder recorded his thanks to Cllr A Hadley for his help in getting to the current point. The 90 percent figure was in relation to a combination of saving from moving to HVO and further savings by moving to electric vehicles. It was anticipated that by 2030 85 percent of the Council fleet would be ultra-low emission vehicles. However, it would not make economical or environmental sense to scrap vehicles early. Overall use would be depreciating and would not be creating a second-hand market.

- Councillor commented that it was good that the transition to HVO was with the intent of it being a transitional fuel and that the Council were looking in the future to move away from it. However, the report did not appear to be looking at an overall change in transportation habits, for example the use of electric bikes for seafront deliveries. The Portfolio Holder confirmed that they were looking at alternatives to the vehicles themselves and the paper considered back in November mentioned a figure of 700 plus vehicles and the paper was now looking at 611 vehicles.
- The risk concerning availability of sufficient HVO fuel. It was noted that the likelihood of this happening was very slim but if it did happen vehicles could be reverted back to diesel. HVO would be used in diminishing quantities and there should be a sufficient supply to cover shortages.
- It was noted that there was no conversion factor for HVO for calculating base carbon emissions and it was suggested that this would be useful.
- There was a concern raised about members of staff using their own homes and electricity supply to charge the Council's electric vehicle fleet, in particular whether this was discriminatory towards certain members of staff. The Board was advised that the charges would go straight to the employer rather than the employee and it would not be practical to charge in car parks as these needed to be available for the public.
- It was suggested that there was no need at the current time to replace the mayoral cars. It was noted that some of the cars were coming to the end of their practical life but they would only be replaced when necessary and this would be reviewed. However others suggested that the cars were outdates and unnecessary

It was moved and seconded that:

Cabinet be asked to reconsider the purchase of new mayoral cars in 2022/23, remove the purchase from the plan and reconsider this at the end of the next three-year period.

Voting: 7:7

The Chairman used his casting vote against the motion.

The Chairman commented that there was no mention in the paper of how the fleet is actually managed and across which areas it was located. The Chairman thanked both Portfolio Holders for their report and response to the Board's questions.

36. Tree management across the BCP area.

The Chairman introduced the report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member of the Board and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'B' to these minutes in the Minute Book. The Chairman advised that this report was being received in response to a request from a Councillor. The report included questions previously submitted by Board members and their

responses. The Board was asked to consider whether there were any issues it wished to take forward. The Portfolio Holder advised the Board that there was a Green Infrastructure Strategy coming forward and was currently being consulted on. There were currently three existing policies for the three areas of the conurbation. The Council was also looking at a Tree planting policy and a number of trees had been planted over the last year. A number of issues were raised by the Board including:

- A Board Member suggested that it would be useful for the Board to get involved in the developmental stage of the Green Infrastructure Strategy and the potential policies. This would be more beneficial than seeing the final strategies immediately in advance of the Cabinet decision.
- There were a number of trees being taken down in various locations around the borough and these trees were not necessarily always being replaced and where they were replaced it was with trees which would take a long time to reach the same maturity as the trees taken down. Thus having a significant impact in carbon sequestration for the BCP area. It was important to reach out to the public regarding the best ways to manage trees and encourage public awareness of the issue and to look after existing trees. It was noted that there was a challenge in terms of the public versus the private realm
- A Board member asked about the Tree management mechanisms currently in place in Planning, including enforcement of Tree Preservation Orders and How these were developed.
- In response to a query regarding the number of trees planted it was confirmed that all trees under the urban tree challenge fund – approximately 6000 have been planted. Some were still waiting to be planted and these would need to wait for the next planting season.
- Board members discussed the possibility of a working group to look into the issues further and consider the public engagement on these issues including the development of the tree strategy Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- There should be more information available on how to get trees protected as preventing the removal of safe trees was better than having to put new trees up. The trees which had been planted were not ‘full’ trees and more mature trees were needed as well.
- Residents lives were being blighted because the Council was not taking action on trees which were reportedly unsafe. He impact of this needed to be considered in any future tree strategy. The COuncil needed to look after some if the older trees better.
- There was a lot of minifomation about TPOs and that work could be done on them with permission to prune.
- There needed to be consistency with regards to deicions taken on TPOs and members questioned what oversight there was when decisions were being taken

The Portfolio Hodler advised that the green infrastructure strategy was still in its early stages. An update would be coming in early August and there would be a member presentation on the issue. After this was complete then the Council would be looking at tree strategies.

The Chairman concluded that it was clear from the debate that there was an appetite amongst the Board members for carrying forward some of the issues raised which could be incorporated into the policy which officers were working on, particularly with responses to residents requests in relation to tree issues and how this service would be provided to our residents. The Chairman therefore proposed that at some point it would be useful to set up a working group to look further at these issues.

37. Scrutiny of Community Safety Related Cabinet Reports

Public Spaces Protection Order – The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety presented a report a copy of which had been circulated to Board Members and a copy of which appeared at Appendix C to these minutes in the Minute Book. The Portfolio Holder highlighted the key points within the report and responded to questions raised in the subsequent discussion including:

- Four areas had been excluded as there was very few reports of any alcohol related anti-social behaviour in these wards. There was therefore no justification for having a PSPO in those areas. A Board member asked about the statistics for these and other wards in terms of reports of anti-social behaviour. **The Portfolio Holder advised that she did not have the information immediately available, but officers would be asked to provide this information to Board members.**
- There were some concerns raised that there may be displacement into the ward areas which were not covered by the PSPOs, but this was thought unlikely due to the nature of the PSPO and the locations of the wards in question.
- A Councillor commented on the limitations of the PSPOs being suggested in that they only dealt with one specific activity and asked the Portfolio Holder whether there had been any progress with other issues such as beach camping. The Portfolio Holder advised of the pre-existence of other legislation and by-laws which were causing issues with this. Where there was existing legislation PSPOs should not be used. There was overnight security patrolling the beach and they were giving overnight wakeup calls to those staying on the beach. The by-laws were working; however, it was noted that they may not work every time. Work was underway to recruit a CSAS officer to deal with parks and open spaces. There was also a piece of work which had just started to look at all by-laws within BCP, there was a process of unpicking them to see how to take them forward.
- A Board member asked about the signs in Bournemouth Square indicating that no alcohol was allowed and there was the ability to confiscate alcohol. It was noted that these signs were from the old PSPO and would need to be changed once the new PSPO was introduced.
- It was noted that if there was persistent anti-social behaviour then a warning would be issued. If it persisted the perpetrator would be issued with a formal notice, further instances would result in being issued with

an ASB injunction and if this was breached, they could be taken to court.

- It was noted that the issue was with behaviour rather than with drinking. This would work better than previous PSPOs because it was targeted more appropriately and there were now more CSAS officers working in the town centres. They could also move around to particular hotspots.
- The Board noted that the PSPO looked good and provided a safe middle ground, but it was essential that it shouldn't be used to target certain groups of people. It was noted that the PSPOs would be used to target behaviours and not individuals. The Board members also commented that it was essential that appropriate training was in place to ensure that the PSPO was enforced effectively.

38. Scrutiny of Homes Related Cabinet Reports

Annual Review of Housing Wholly Owned Companies – The Portfolio Holder for Homes presented the report. A copy of which had been circulated to Board members and a copy of which appears at appendix D to these minutes in the Minute Book. Following the introduction, the Portfolio Holder responded to a number of issues raised by Board members including:

- That the main purpose of the companies was not to make a profit but they were a vehicle to help families and provide housing for those who were homeless within the BCP area.
- There was a concern raised that the audit fees had doubled as a result of the pandemic which seemed extraordinary. It was noted that a procurement exercise for a new auditor was conducted in April 2020 and fees across the board had increased considerably. However, there was concern expressed that the Council was not getting value for money.
- It was noted that a company secretary had been in post previously, but they had left, recruitment was underway to appoint someone to the post temporarily.
- A Board member recorded their thanks to Dan Povey, the accountant responsible for this as he was due to leave and had done an excellent job.
- Happy for business plan to be part of the report – will make sure this is part of the report in the future. Did have a company secretary in place but he left and are looking to recruit a new one.

The Chairman thanked the Portfolio Holder for the report but noted that it said very little about what the companies were doing and suggested that further detail be included in future.

39. Future Meeting Dates 2021/22

The dates of future meetings were noted.

The meeting ended at 8.38 pm

CHAIRMAN

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Statement by Branksome Park & Canford Cliffs Residents' Association the to Overview and Scrutiny Board re Agenda item 6. 'Tree management across the BCP area'

We were fortunate that the Victorians had the foresight to plant trees for future generations, now these trees are maturing, they need better management.

The Council quite often stipulate that new trees should be planted to replace those that have been removed, but the Association's impression is that very little is done to monitor the outcome..

The Borough of Poole had an Enforcement policy (see below) which used to be actively pursued. Could this be adopted by the BCP Council please?

John Sprackling,
President, Branksome Park & Canford Cliffs Residents' Association

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