

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 02 April 2025 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr C Rigby – Chairman

Cllr D d'Orton-Gibson – Vice-Chairman

Present: Cllr B Chick, Cllr J Clements, Cllr C Goodall, Cllr L Northover,
Cllr G Wright and Cllr P Canavan

Also in attendance: Cllr Felicity Rice (virtually)

42. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Vanessa Rickets and Cllr Jamie Martin.

43. Substitute Members

Cllr Patrick Canavan substituted for Cllr Jamie Martin.

44. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest made on this occasion.

45. Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 26 February 2025 were approved as a correct record.

46. Public Issues

There were no public issues received for this meeting.

47. Recommendations from Portfolio Holders, Cabinet or Council

The Chair presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'A' to these Minutes in the Minute Book. The Council's constitution provides that Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committees may consider requests for work from a range of sources, including requests from Portfolio Holders, Cabinet and Council. The O&S Committee is asked to consider two requests for scrutiny recently made by Council and to determine these requests in line with the associated constitution procedure rules.

Stop the closure of Redhill Paddling Pool

A petition to stop the closure of Redhill Paddling Pool was presented by a member of the public at full council and the recommendation below was agreed.

Council asked that Overview and Scrutiny investigate how the council arrived at this situation and investigate ways to keep the paddling pool open and report back to full Council.

Motion to Strengthen building standards through Local Authority Control.

A motion was submitted to full Council following the Government's commitment to building high quality, affordable homes to address the housing crisis. This motion asked the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State and Outline the council position.

There was an amendment made to that motion which added a fourth action which was as follows:

- Refer the motion to the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee for recommendation of the Council's policy position on this matter."

Following discussion of both requests it was agreed to accept the Paddling Pool request but not to add the Building standards issue to the work plan for the Committee. However, the Committee agreed that it would welcome the submission of a scrutiny request on this issue with greater detail.

RESOLVED

**1. That the Redhill paddling pool matter be added to the work plan
That the Building Standards item would not be added to the work plan
due to the Council's position being outlined in the original motion.**

48. Planning Service Improvement Update

The Leader of the Council presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'B' to these Minutes in the Minute Book. The Committee were informed of updates on the ongoing work to improve the performance of the BCP Council planning service with significant successes in the last year to reduce the backlog and stabilise the workforce.

The Committee were informed that the service had improved massively, there were concerns regarding performance and the team have worked hard on this and growth has been recognised.

The team now has a lot of permanent staff compared to previously having a lot of agency staff.

MasterGov, combined planning portal, has been implemented which makes it easier for residents to look for applications. Although the system did not have everything that was wanted, it had to be implemented by 31 March.

The team is on a continuing journey.

There was a discussion around the Local Plan which was rejected and the next steps which would have a fresh evidence base with up to date information which would stand in good stead. The team were aware there would need to be more work done on this and there would be refined consultations.

The Committee Chair commented that the next steps Cabinet report maybe something they wanted to have at their next meeting.

RESOLVED that the Committee note and endorse the measures underway to improve and transform the planning service.

Voting: Unanimous

49. Recommendations from the Safer Accommodation Strategy Working Group

The Lead Member of the working group presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'C' to these Minutes in the Minute Book. At its meeting on 20 November 2024 the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a working group to consider the BCP Council Safer Accommodation Strategy in response to a recommendation referred to the Committee from Full Council. The group met three times during January and February 2025. The findings of the working group and the recommendations are summarised in the appendix to the report.

The lead member of the working group went through the 3 Key lines of enquiry the working group looked at. The group established that there was no one size fits all with accommodation, many declined group accommodation for various reasons. Separate accommodation could work better for some as well.

The strategy did not look at just domestic abuse amongst couples other groups were mentioned in the working group such as elderly or friends who live together.

The positive work that had gone into the strategy was acknowledged by the group and the lead member thanked officer who helped facilitate the group as well as the officers from the housing team.

RESOLVED that

Recommendations to Cabinet

- 1. That as part of the Safe Accommodation Strategy development, officers consider an awareness campaign and/or guidance materials on the different types of financial support that are available to support those fleeing domestic abuse, in particular in relation to different types of housing tenure (e.g. shared tenancies, joint mortgages), in order to break down a potentially**

significant barrier to survivors accessing support to end their abuse.

- 2. That the engagement plan for the Safe Accommodation Strategy should ensure that the voices of those with lived experience are heard and reflected within the Strategy.**
- 3. That an all councillor briefing session be added to the Safe Accommodation Strategy engagement plan, to ensure members are adequately informed about the strategy and able to contribute views, and to enable them to fulfil their role within the community by communicating the benefits of the Safe Accommodation Strategy to residents.**
- 4. a) that the provision of safe accommodation and associated commissioning process be reviewed,**

b) that scrutiny members be invited to review and input into this review, prior to the commencement of commissioning, through an additional meeting of this working group.
- 5. That the use of temporary accommodation be continuously reviewed and specific KPIs be established for monitoring the success of the new safe accommodation model, including occupancy rates, length of stay, outcomes for survivors (e.g., successful move-on to permanent housing), and survivor satisfaction. These KPIs should be reviewed regularly by the relevant scrutiny committee to ensure accountability and transparency.**
- 6. That Cabinet, with the support of the council's Corporate Management Board, be requested to take a view on forthcoming decisions that may be of significant or contentious public impact, regardless of decision-making thresholds, and an all councillor briefing be held before any such decisions are made, to enable all councillors, and particularly ward councillors, to be properly informed.**

Recommendations to Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny

- 1. Notes recommendation 4 to Cabinet and agrees to re-engage this working group to support commissioning work at an appropriate time.**
- 2. Notes recommendation 5 to Cabinet and assists in the development of KPIs related to the Safe Accommodation Strategy by scheduling a scrutiny item to provide test and challenge to draft measures.**

- 3. Schedules annual updates on the progress of the implementation of the Safer Accommodation strategy and the wider domestic abuse work, including monitoring of associated KPIs, and that all O&S chairs be invited to attend, so that they can schedule associated scrutiny appropriately. This may be as part of a wider annual update to scrutiny on housing matters.**

Voting: Unanimous

50. Play Streets Update

Councillor Felicity Rice updated the Committee on her recent meeting regarding Play Streets.

Play street is a scheme where residents on quiet streets can close their streets for up to 3 hours either regularly or a few times a year, to make it safe for play or socialising.

The draft policy has been reviewed and the full policy should be ready to view in around 3 weeks and there would be communications going out regarding this.

51. Work Plan

The Chair presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'D' to these Minutes in the Minute Book. The Committee was asked to consider and identify work priorities for publication in a Work Plan.

The Committee decided that they would like to have the Cabinet report on the Local Plan on the agenda for their meeting in May.

**RESOLVED that
the Overview and Scrutiny Committee review, updated and confirmed
its Work Plan adding the Red Hill Paddling Pool item and the Local
Plan report.**

Voting: Nem Con

52. Future Meeting Dates

The next meeting is Wednesday 14 May 2025 6.00pm

The meeting ended at 7.25 pm

CHAIRMAN