

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 September 2019 at 4.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr P Broadhead – Chairman

Cllr M Haines – Vice-Chairman

Present: Cllr M Anderson, Cllr M Earl, Cllr L Fear, Cllr N Greene,
Cllr R Lawton, Cllr P Miles, Cllr C Rigby, Cllr B Dove (Reserve) (In
place of Cllr M Iyengar), Cllr R Burton (Reserve) (In place of Cllr M F
Brooke), Cllr L Lewis (Reserve) (In place of Cllr G Farquhar) and
Cllr D Mellor (Reserve) (In place of Cllr M Greene)

Also in Cllr D Brown, Cllr M Howell, Cllr S Moore, Cllr Dr F Rice and
attendance: Cllr L Williams

32. Apologies

The Democratic Services Officer reported that Cllr S Bartlett had replaced Cllr N Brooks on the Board

Apologies were received from Cllr S Bartlett, Cllr M Brooke, Cllr G Farquhar, Cllr M Greene, Cllr M Iyengar and Cllrs P Miles and C Rigby for part of the meeting

33. Substitute Members

Notification was received from the relevant group leaders or their nominated representatives of the following substitutes: Cllr R Burton substituted for Cllr M Brooke, Cllr D Mellor substituted for Cllr M Greene, Cllr B Dove substituted for Cllr M Iyengar and Cllr L Lewis substituted for Cllr G Farquhar.

34. Declarations of Interests

None

35. Public Speaking

The Democratic Services Officer advised that no questions, statements or petitions had been received by the required deadline. However, there were a number of requests to speak in relation to the agenda item on 5G.

36. Call for Evidence - 5G Connectivity

The Chairman introduced the item and reminded everyone that the purpose of this session was to hear verbal submissions as part of the call for evidence. There was also an opportunity for any interested parties to make

written submissions on the issue, the closing date for written submissions was 7 October. The Board would then consider the responses to the Call for evidence further at its meeting in November.

The following persons had registered to speak:

- John Hunt (on behalf of Susan Lennon) – West Howe Community Association
- Nick Greenwood
- Charles Ross Illingworth
- David Merefild
- Anthony Story – Silicon South
- Marios Angelopoulos – Bournemouth University – Computing
- Adrian Dwyer
- Sam Crowe – Director of Public Health Dorset

The speakers spoke on a range of issues both in favour of the roll out of 5G and against it. A number of issues were raised including:

- The apparent lack of accountability regarding the instillation of fibre optics in Bournemouth;
- The development of 5G through weapons technology;
- Secrecy concerning 5G;
- Omissions and inaccuracies in various official reports on 5G;
- Studies evidencing health impacts and concerns in relation to 5G technology;
- Consideration of alternative technologies to 5G;
- Insurance unable to cover illnesses in relation to 5G technology;
- Impact of 5G technology on the environment and wildlife;
- International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) guidelines;
- Concern of a rise in cancer and other illnesses, a link to brain and heart tumours, radiation through 5G high frequencies and infertility;
- Out of date and inaccurate health reports being used;
- Request for 5G moratorium from leading scientists and doctors;
- Towns in the UK having adopted 5G moratoria, high profile cities across Europe had also adopted moratoria on 5G;
- Geneva reversed its 5G rollout after people falling ill;
- BCP area was well served in alternatives to 5G such as fibre optics;
- Decision making driven by machines rather than humans;
- Concern that Council's were responding to publicity material and promoting technology above people;
- Public Health England were falling behind in their advice and effects would only become apparent afterwards;
- People should be allowed to consent and take precautionary measures;
- 5G trials were already taking place in cities around the country and BCP Council needed to keep up;
- There were economic and development opportunities through 5G;
- 5G would improve social outcomes and quality of life;

- The divide between the digital and tech sectors would merge together
- The various sectors within BCP were well placed to support 5G technology;
- 5G will change how we share and consume information;
- There were a number of different technologies which will make up 5G;
- New technology would be commissioned and deployed for 5G;
- Technology needed for 5G;
- The amount of information able to be handled by a 5G network;
- Ability to do things not previously possible and tackle new problems;
- Job creation opportunities due to 5G;
- Improvements to the local economy with 5G developments and the need to attract high tech industries to the area;
- The frequency of 5G in the Lansdowne area should be no concern to public health according to the World Health Organisation;

The speakers were asked if they were prepared to answer questions to the Board and the Board asked a number of questions to some of the speakers to clarify some of the points they had made. In response to a question the Director of Public Health Dorset undertook to look into some of the information submitted and provide the Public Health view.

RESOLVED that the verbal representations on 5G be received and that they form part of the submission for the 5G call for evidence to be considered at the Board's meeting on 11 November 2019.

Cllr Rigby arrived at the start of this item and left the meeting at the end of this item.

Cllr Miles arrived at the conclusion of this item.

37. Scrutiny of Environment Related Cabinet Reports

Management of Waste and Cleansing Services in Christchurch from April 2020 – The Portfolio Holder introduced the report and explained that from 1 April 2020 BCP would be responsible for operating these services. An interim solution was proposed at option 3 within the report which would be in place whilst a strategic review of cleansing and waste services across BCP was completed which would be in line with new legislation being introduced in 2023. The Portfolio Holder was asked a number of questions on the report including:

- What the life span of waste collection vehicles in the current fleet was. It was noted that the life of the average vehicle was 7 years. The Poole fleet would be renewed on a rolling cycle. Dorset vehicles were at the end of their life and investment was being sought for this.
- Whether waste was collected from outside the BCP area at the Wilverly Road household recycling centre. The contract for this site was currently managed through the Dorset Waste Partnership and runs until 2024.

- Whether there was a net financial benefit to the proposals. The cost took into account the mixed collection of glass rather than separately but collected separately this would have a higher value.
- What the driver behind the proposals was – environmental or financial. It was explained that it was a balance between environmental impact and financial impact.
- Why such a small step towards harmonisation and why food waste collection was not being implemented in Poole. It was estimated that 25% - 30% of residual waste was food waste. There was a balance between the cost of implementing a food waste collection before the government waste review outcome. It was a pragmatic step to focus on recycling in Christchurch.
- The environmental impact of not separating glass. Less vehicles would be needed for collection and the majority of glass can be withdrawn.
- What the timescale was for a full review of the waste collection service. The government consultation would need to be factored in and with the number of staff and new structures required as well as existing contracts in place it was expected that it would take 2-3 years.
- Whether a single waste collection service was a priority. The Portfolio Holder responded that the environment was at the heart of everything she did. Food waste would be a high priority going forward. However, it was more important to reduce food waste than to collect it.
- Whether green waste collections would be harmonised across BCP. Proposals for the green waste collection were contained in another paper and the cost for this service outlined there. Bournemouth residents were able to have two bins for a reduced price but would be paying more per litre.
- How the proposals in the report would sync with the people strategy. IT was noted that staff would be subject to the pay and grading policies across BCP.

The Board discussed harmonisation arrangements for waste collection and disposal and the existing contracts in place and when harmonisation would be complete. The Board expressed concern that the level of harmonisation presented in papers to date did not go far enough.

38. Scrutiny of Regeneration Related Cabinet reports

Happyland, East Undercliff Promenade – Grant of Lease – The Portfolio Holder introduced the report explaining that this was the outcome of a scheme which was worked up mostly under the previous administration of Bournemouth Borough Council. The current building was structurally supporting the cliff and the building was starting to fail. Options for addressing the problem were outlined and the option preferred was to establish a special purpose vehicle (SPV) by the Meyrick Estate to grant a lease to the nominee of the SPV. The Council would grant a 150 year lease for a small annual rent, this would be conditional upon the grant of planning permission for the site. It was noted that whilst it may have been preferable for the Council to retain control of the site there was not a viable ‘inhouse’

option for development. In the following discussion a number of issues were raised by the Board including:

- It being a prime site for development to provide for aspirations for a modern seafront;
- The size of the proposed hotel on the site. A hotel was not necessarily proposed. A building suitable for the site would be sought.
- Whether a lift would be installed. A developer would want to maximise space. A new lift would be required if the walkway was removed.
- There was no reference in the report to the Council's seafront strategy;
- The freeholders and the Council would not necessarily align;
- There appeared to be a lack of consultation with ward Members and also with trade and industry. The Portfolio Holder commented that he was committed to consultation and wanted to be in a position to see business coming through but that the report was presented to him with a decision between two options required.
- The Monitoring Officer confirmed that following external legal advice the options for the Council to approve the plans for the site risked a public procurement challenge.

The Chairman hoped that the Council would do everything possible to ensure a good development on the site and the Portfolio hoped that with future plans there would be extensive consultation.

Lansdowne – The Portfolio Holder introduced the report and explained that this was a long-term project of Bournemouth Borough Council. The Vision for Lansdowne would promote sustainable travel and deliver on a number of different Council priorities. It would create a better flow between Bournemouth train station, the town centre and the seafront.

A Member asked about re-provisioning the public toilets which were submerged at Lansdowne Roundabout. These were not part of the scheme but the Portfolio Holder confirmed that he would like to see more public toilets across the conurbation. However, the toilets at Lansdowne had been out of use for a long time.

A Member commented that the paper was really transformative and the area around Lansdowne was seeing a lot of change.

The Chairman asked about the next steps for the scheme and for assurance that the proposals be fast tracked to be delivered by 2021. Overview and Scrutiny Board asked to take an active role in ensuring the development and requested the Cabinet Members speak to colleagues regarding the emerging underground issue.

Wessex Fields Development Site – The Cabinet Portfolio Holder outlined the recommendations within the Cabinet report and explained the reasons behind the current recommendations and changes to the scheme. It was noted that phase 1.1 of the scheme would be continuing as planned. However, the second party of phase one would stop at the boundary of the

development site at this time and stage 2 would not progress until the use of the site was determined.

The Chairman noted that the Council had a masterplan for the site and challenged the Portfolio Holder as to why the development wouldn't proceed through the site. The Portfolio Holder responded that the Masterplan was aspirational and provided ideas but there was nothing concrete in it in terms of development and other than the hospital there were no solid development plans. There was an opportunity to open up to consultation and to see who comes forward with ideas for the site.

In response to a question the Portfolio Holder confirmed that there was no additional finance required as a result of the paper. A Councillor commented that by not proceeding when the contractor was on site in the summer the works would have a greater financial impact.

Ward Councillors raised concerns with the comments from the Portfolio Holder that he hadn't come across anybody who thought phase 2 of the scheme was a good idea and suggested there were many who considered a northbound junction from the hospital a good idea. The Portfolio Holder commented that they would look at the proposed consultation but that he wouldn't be pushing for the phase 2 flyover. Ward Members felt that the concerns of residents in the ward were not being considered

A Board Member asked if the Portfolio Holder had spoken with the hospital. He noted that he had but conversations had been largely focused on the road through the site.

It was noted that at present there was no funding for phase 2 of the site and it was not a priority for the Cabinet. There was no desire to build the road until there was a sustainable proposal for Employment use.

The Chairman asked about job creation on the site and noted that it was limited to 500 jobs if phase 2 did not proceed. The Portfolio advised that they would be looking at a more sustainable site for further jobs to be created. The Chairman was concerned that sustainability was being used as a reason to do nothing and that job creation had not been given sufficient consideration. The Portfolio Holder commented that the site needed to draw people from the conurbation rather than those coming from some distance away. The Portfolio Holder was confident that the Council would be able to find the right partners for the site.

A Councillor asked about traffic congestion in the area. It was noted that the present plans would not create any further congestion as it didn't join up to another road.

A Councillor commented on the potential reputational risk of building a road to nowhere. The Portfolio Holder commented that he did not believe there was any risk as they fully intended to develop the site. There were also

concern raised regarding backtracking on an approved planning application and running further consultation and the associated costs.

Cllr Lewis left during consideration of this item.

39. Overview and Scrutiny Forward Plan

It was noted that there was a new Cabinet Forward Plan published. The Chair and Vice-Chair would look whether any items should be added to the Board's agenda. The Chairman asked that if any Board member had an item they wished to put on a future agenda they email him with the request.

40. Future Meeting Dates

It was noted that with potentially 15 items going to the next Cabinet meeting it was likely that there would need to be two Overview and Scrutiny Board meetings to cover the issues requiring Scrutiny. These would both start at 10.00am on Friday 4 October and Monday 7 October.

The meeting ended at 8.57 pm

CHAIRMAN