

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Minutes of the Meeting held on 07 December 2020 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr S Bartlett – Chairman

Cllr T O'Neill – Vice-Chairman

Present: Cllr D Borthwick, Cllr M Cox, Cllr L Dedman, Cllr B Dion, Cllr M Earl,
Cllr J Edwards, Cllr L Fear, Cllr M Howell, Cllr D Kelsey, Cllr C Rigby,
Cllr V Slade, Cllr L Allison (In place of Cllr G Farquhar) and
Cllr A Filer (In place of Cllr D Farr)

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

108. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr D Farr and Cllr G Farquhar.

109. Substitute Members

Cllr A Filer substituted for Cllr D Farr and Cllr L Allison substituted for Cllr G Farquhar.

110. Declarations of Interests

Cllr J Edwards declared for the purpose of transparency, in relation to agenda item 6, Scrutiny of Transport and Sustainability Related Cabinet Reports - Climate Action Annual Report 2019/20, that a member of her family was a report author and she would therefore not take part in this item.

111. Public Speaking

There were no public questions, statements or petitions submitted for this meeting.

112. Scrutiny of Regeneration, Economy and Strategic Planning Related Cabinet Reports

BCP Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document - The Portfolio Holder for transport and Sustainability introduced the report, a copy of which had been circulated and which appears as Appendix 'I' to the Cabinet minutes of 16 December in the Minute Book. A number of issues were raised by the Board in the subsequent discussion, including:

- Parts of the Twin Sails regeneration area were designated as zone B but were within good walking distance and within the regeneration zone which should itself have good community facilities. A Councillor felt that these parts should be within zone A as was part already across the water. It was also noted that the Port was designated as zone c and it was suggested that this should be an area where we were reducing traffic. The Portfolio Holder advised that it wasn't expected that this would be completely right from the beginning and there were options for reviewing the zones. However, it was also noted that the difference in requirements between zone b and zone a were minimal and only in reference to 2-bedroom houses and family size, 3-bedroom flats.
- A decision to move coach parking by the previous Christchurch Council from the Town Centre to a more remote location. A Councillor asked if there was anything more on coach issues on this report. The Portfolio Holder advised that this policy related solely to new development parking provision and did not address any normal car parks or on street parking provision.
- Many bus companies were now working with very tight margins in the provision of some routes and in light of this the Portfolio Holder was asked about the timescales for when it was anticipated that the bus services would meet the needs of the community. The Board was advised that the Council needed to work with the bus companies and that they had been involved with this policy. The major changes from previous policies were in zone A and B which were areas which were already well served by bus routes. Some routes were just on the margin of viability should in theory be helped by the parking standards policy. The overall timescale for this would need to work itself out.
- A Board member commented that parking was major contributor to BCP finances and there was a need to support retailers and the hospitality sector particularly at the moment. It was suggested to delay proposals to allow for natural erosion following Brexit and Covid to take its course. The Portfolio Holder responded that he couldn't see anyway in which the policy would work against businesses in town centres and reiterated that there was no change to public car parking or on street parking under the policy.
- A Councillor asked about the previous proposals for constructing future properties with car parking which could be converted to other uses as the need for car parking reduces. It was noted that this was now unlikely to be required as there was no onsite parking proposed within zone A.
- Employers do not have to have parking provision for staff but it leads to certain roads getting clogged up with on street parking. It was noted that there was a Government consultation on on-pavement parking which could make the issue worse. The Portfolio Holder explained that he understood that there would be opportunities for local authorities to specifically permit pavement parking in places where it was suitable and providing that there was full accessibility. A review of town centre parking going ahead at pace but was not connected to this report.
- A Councillor commented that they were pleased to see this come forward and asked about residents parking and different zones. They were aware of several roads who wanted residents parking but there were concerns about costs raised by residents. It was noted that very

few areas qualified for residents' parking schemes, but it was expected that charging for residents parking would be very reasonable, in order to cover administrative costs and enforcement.

- Public car parking in Town Centres. It was noted that residents buy parking permits for nearby car parks thus blocking all spaces for visitors. It was noted that there were long term discounted permits available, but these were not necessarily there in perpetuity. It was noted that there may be an opportunity to issue evening permits for areas that were predominately in commercial use during the day, but it was important that the number of cars did not increase as the number of houses did.
- A Board member asked about the relationship between sustainable transport corridors and parking zones. It was noted that sustainable transport was governed with Traffic Regulation Orders rather than parking. These were part of predecessor local plans. These were related to transport corridors but were not quite the same thing.
- Equalities issues – The Portfolio Holder was asked what would happen if someone became disabled or was elderly and the equalities issues around this. The Councillor also asked what the legal implications would be when a property was sold on with regards to not being able to park a car. It was noted that the restriction on car parking would move with the lease or deeds of a property. However, for someone eligible for a blue badge an exception would be made.
- It was suggested that it was human nature for someone to want to own a car and the streets were already full. It was suggested that the requirements for particularly zone A and B should be reviewed.

113. Scrutiny of Transport and Sustainability Related Cabinet Reports

Climate Action Annual Report - The Portfolio Holder for Transport and Sustainability introduced the report, a copy of which had been circulated and which appears as Appendix 'H' to the Cabinet minutes of 16 December in the Minute Book. A number of issues were raised by the Board in the subsequent discussion, including:

- In response to a question the Portfolio Holder advised that the 153 point action plan, was approved for consultation in 2019, the consultation had since been delayed. The action plan consisted of 100 actions for the Council to reduce emissions in Council targets and a further 53 actions to work with partners. Some of the internal Council actions had already been completed. Others were being considered as to how the Council would be able to deliver them over the next 10 years. Some were condensed into others and others were not considered suitable for moving forwards. The 53 external actions were the ones being consulted on starting on 17 December 2020. Nothing out of the 153 had been lost.
- That it would be useful to show which actions had been achieved or condensed in order to demonstrate the work that the Council had undertaken. The Portfolio Holder advised that whilst the report included some details on next steps there was no direct mapping and the Portfolio Holder undertook to take the suggestion for this on board.
- A Councillor commented on the global reduction in greenhouse gas emissions due to the global pandemic and the issue that was outlined in

the report that greater reductions in greenhouse gasses were needed year on year. How this was going to be done was not outlined in the report.

- A Councillor asked about how the achievements would be measured in terms of reductions in tonnes of CO2 and where this couldn't be equated for some actions, alternative measures of progress, including reductions of plastic and waste and details on how this was being done and how it was encouraged. The Portfolio Holder confirmed that this was an important point, and this was included as part of the greening of the energy tariff. The Portfolio Holder advised that he felt there would be considerable advances over the next year.
- It was noted that words used in the report included encourage, continue work started or strategize, and it was suggested that this did not show a lot of commitment to definite targets moving forward. The Portfolio Holder advised that this was the annual report on what has happened over the last 12 months rather than looking forward. However, there was an element in the report on next steps, but this was a report on what has happened rather than an action plan. It was hoped that the action plan would be available in the next few months.
- The report included a point about investigating opportunities for local waste treatment facilities and a Board member suggested that just because something was local did not mean it was the best environmentally and that this should be looked into further.
- A Councillor commented on the working together section of the report and asked that schools be included in the partnership. The Portfolio Holder advised that he hoped that he would be addressing all of these issues and confirmed that schools should absolutely be involve, not just as high energy users but because of their role in educating the next generation in issues of climate change. The Leadership Board would be established at the earliest opportunity. It was thought that the public engagement consultation would need to have finished but the Portfolio Holder advised that he wanted to get board together as soon as possible.
- A Councillor commented that because of the way in which the report was presented it was difficult to see the positives. There was also concern that members were not sufficiently engaged. The Portfolio Holder accepted these comments and advised that they would take full responsibility for the presentation and consider it further for future reports.
- There were concerns raised by the Board that the 2050 target date was not ambitious enough and that it had been suggested that it was currently feasible for the BCP area to be carbon neutral by 2042 and that this should be where the targets were aimed at. The Portfolio Holder suggested that the requirement of 2050 meant that this could be achieved in a more accessible and inclusive way.
- A Councillor commented that more officer resource and therefore funding needed to be put into this by the administration. It was noted that this should not be dependent upon the sustainability on its own and they would have a role of an enabler to support this approach across the whole Council.

- It was noted that over 60 percent of emissions come from leased out buildings but there was no further emphasis on how the Council could begin to deal with this issue and asked whether these were included within the 2030 or 2050 plan. There were included within the 2030 target where there were within BCP and the Portfolio Holder advised that we had significant influence over this and considered it an area that we needed to concentrate on.
- With regards to the paragraph on investments and in particular pension fund investments the Portfolio Holder responded that the issue about this went very wide and there were lots of issues on this and advised that he would not favour trying to influence the pension fund but would want to address it in a more collaborative way with bringing employees on board.
- A Board member raised concerns about the climate action working group and sub-groups not continuing. The Portfolio Holder appreciated the concerns but noted that some groups did not even have full membership. They were set up for all the right reasons but were not engaging in the best way. The Portfolio advised that he had reached out to a number of members on how they wanted to be engaged and hoped to get more ideas following the public consultation. A Councillor suggested that there should be a way for members to be involved not just as Councillors but on behalf of residents as well.

The Chairman suggested that a report should be brought back in approximately six months. It was noted that it was expected to come back to Cabinet, with public engagement results back by mid February, the officer group would commence late February or early March and a plan should be available by next summer.

114. Scrutiny of Community Safety Related Cabinet Report

Domestic Abuse Strategy - The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety introduced the report, a copy of which had been circulated and which appears as Appendix 'K' to the Cabinet minutes of 16 December in the Minute Book. A number of issues were raised by the Board in the subsequent discussion, including:

- A Councillor raised a number of concerns with the strategy, including that there were no principles of measurement for what was trying to be achieved, that there was no specific plan outlined for how performance in this area could be improved and also that there was reference to finance concerns and accessing temporary one-off grants. Overall, it was felt that this was disappointing.
- It was noted that most reports of domestic violence came through the police and other intelligence and within the plan it was set out what we would do with reports received. The Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference group met on a weekly basis and considered what action was required for all those on a 'watch' list. There were priorities which were held jointly with the police. It was explained that the strategy was not intended to provide a one size fits all plan and issues would need to be dealt with on a case by case basis.

- A Board member commented that the report was lacking on information regarding investment of resources in prevention and education and funding refuge places. The report referred to a SWOT analysis, but it currently did not have sight of where the weaknesses were. It was noted that financial issues were included within the main report under financial implications. It was noted that the £425k referred to in the report included funding for raising awareness of the issue but that there was a need to be sensitive in the way that this was done, particularly for those who may be at risk.
- It was noted that the report referred to a delivery plan that would be developed and it was suggested that this should be shared with the Board.
- Members asked if, due to the current circumstances, whether another rise in the number of incidences of domestic violence was expected and how would the delivery plan reflect the impact of Corona virus on this. It was noted that the strategy was a joint initiative with other agencies and any update could be brought back to O&S if this was helpful. The Covid response to this area was approved back in April and there was joint communication with police and partners and awareness was being promoted through '#you're not alone'. Cases had gone up recently and the numbers were concerning. The strategy needed to be agreed in order to work together and bring the numbers down. It was normal for cases to increase at this time of year.
- A Councillor commented that they would have liked to have seen more detail in the report but there was a lot of detail that could not be gone into and felt that the report was a good work in progress on this issue.
- A number of Board members felt that significantly more work was needed on this report before it could be approved by Cabinet. It was noted that there was no information on what the targets were, there was also a statement regarding men in gay or bisexual relationships experiencing more domestic violence, it was noted that women in the same situations also did but these were not mentioned. Furthermore, there was no information in the paper about mental health, repeat victims or education. There was also very little in the paper about people who may be difficult to reach through cultural or language barriers. It was suggested that the strategy be acknowledge but that Cabinet request a full delivery paper for what the Council can do and what can be measured.

There was further discussion and a number of suggestions for how the Overview and Scrutiny Board should respond to this paper in terms of making recommendations to Cabinet. Following the discussions and the concerns raised by the Board the Director for Communities suggested that the report be delayed and that it should come back to Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Board with high level strategy and delivery plan in a couple of months.

The Board agreed to this suggestion and made the following recommendation to Cabinet

RECOMMEDED that this item is withdrawn from the December Cabinet meeting to allow time for the issues raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Board to be considered further in order to update the strategy document and to present it to a future Overview and Scrutiny Board and Cabinet together with the high level delivery plan.

Voting: Nem. Con.

115. Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED that under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs such interest in disclosing the information.

116. Scrutiny of Environment, Cleansing and Waste Related Cabinet Reports

Bereavement Services Business Plan Phase 1- The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Cleansing and Waste introduced the report, a copy of which had been circulated and which appears as Appendix 'C' to the Cabinet minutes of 16 December in the Minute Book. A number of issues were raised by the Board in the subsequent discussion, including:

- A Councillor commented that they found it difficult to support the report due to the proposals and the impact they would have around the whole market for death and bereavement in Poole and the outward and ongoing impact that it would have. There was concern about how the funding was going to be invested. It was asked why immediate investment in Poole was not included as an option within the report. The Portfolio Holder noted that this was included as an option with the report. The division of funding for Bournemouth and Poole was outlined by the Head of Parks and Bereavement Services.
- There was also concerns raised about the lack of burial space now available within Poole and the impact that this would have going forward. Officers and the Portfolio Holder confirmed that there was an awful lot of work to do in this area and appreciated the concerns of Councillors.
- In response to a question regarding the investment and the potential for borrowing in this area the Portfolio Holder confirmed that this was the first stage and there were several reasons to proceed on this basis. It was noted that the paper set out an interim position over the next 18 months.
- There was discussion regarding working in partnership with other funeral providers and the reasons for and against this option.
- A Board member asked about the natural burial ground in Throop, the Portfolio Holder advised that he was not sure if it was meadow or woodland but there would be no grave markers and would be owned by the Council.

The meeting ended at 9.35 pm

CHAIRMAN