

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

Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 November 2024 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr C Rigby – Chairman

Cllr D d'Orton-Gibson – Vice-Chairman

Present: Cllr B Chick, Cllr C Goodall, Cllr J Martin, Cllr L Northover,
Cllr Dr F Rice and Cllr G Wright

Also in
attendance:

20. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr V Ricketts and Cllr J Clements. Cllr J Bagwell did not attend the meeting.

21. Substitute Members

There were no substitute members.

22. Declarations of Interests

The Chair declared for transparency that he works for a community energy company. The declaration was made during item 9 BCP Plan for Play.

23. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 11 September 2024 were approved as a correct record.

24. Public Issues

There were no public issues.

25. Recommendation from Council – Safer Accommodation Strategy

The Overview and Scrutiny specialist outlined the process for the Committee to follow in consideration of this item on membership and the Committee's remit. The Chair then outlined the motion that was passed at Full Council. The proposer of the motion spoke to the motion and his speech is attached to these minutes. The proposer of the amendment to the motion then spoke to the motion and his speech is attached to these minutes.

The Housing Health and Social Care Manager then gave a presentation to the committee.

There was a suggestion that Woman's Aid would like to be involved and should be involved in the working group meetings.
It was agreed that the working group should be small and targeted and that other relevant groups can also be targeted in the consultation process.

The Chair outlined the following 3 themes for the working group to look at, which would be expanded upon during the first session these were as follows:

1. Levels of support provided through refuge/ housing provision for those fleeing domestic abuse - looking at this under previous, current and proposed future arrangements.
2. Examine the role of refuges and what they look like in a modern society.
3. Scrutinise the engagement and consultation plan that will be undertaken in developing the Safe Accommodation and Commissioning Strategy.

The Committee discussed the membership of the group and it was suggested that it be Cross-Party and include members from all Overview and Scrutiny bodies if possible.

RESOLVED that the item details would be decided under the Work Plan item. The Chair would contact the group leaders and ask for nominations for the working group and then confirm membership in consultation with the Vice-Chair. The working group would also agree their own leader.

Voting: Unanimous

26. Nutrient Neutrality

The Director of Planning and Transport 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 Committee was informed that the report provided an Update on Nutrient Neutrality in respect to phosphates in the River Avon Special Area of Conservation.
It was reported that Local fish farms have an agreement to stop polluting by 2030. 1 fish farm will be closing and the other would change they way they work to make this possible.

RESOLVED that the report was noted

Voting: Unanimous

27. BCP Council Plan for Play

The Portfolio Holder for Communities and Partnerships 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 was informed that the BCP Council Plan for Play brings forward a strategy that sets out how the Council's play infrastructure should

be managed, designed and improved. The key strategy directly aligns and supports many of the Council's key ambitions. The report highlighted the detail contained in the strategy, most notably how the stock of play facilities – play equipment, cycle and BMX facilities – was in severe decline and in need of significant investment.

The Plan for Play included an Improvement Plan that set out a phased approach to investing in the equipment that was crucial to young people and their physical and mental well-being. The investment could make an immediate impact that ensures play areas stayed open and create a pathway to work with communities, local business and funders to support play needs within BCP.

Adopting the Plan for Play sets out a vision and priorities for what future provision should look like across BCP and could be applied as funds became available or decisions were made.

A presentation was given by The Strategic Lead for Greenspace and Conservation on the strategy and play equipment. Full details were not given on the play sites that would benefit as there would be an all members briefing in the future that would outline those specific sites.

It was stated that a lot of sites are in need of replacement or repair. Site audits had been done to understand needs for each area.

It was stated that play was found to be the second most important thing for residents and was important for children's development.

The Plan for Play included a 5 phased approach which would include 2 new play spaces. Just over 10 million pounds in funding was received for the 5 phased approach. The 1st phase would commence from April 2025 if approved at Cabinet.

One of the 5 priorities was Play Streets and the active travel team were part of this.

It was noted that if play equipment was removed from an area it would become/ remain green space and there may be a small amount of funding available to put in a bench or something similar.

RESOLVED that Committee reviewed the Plan for Play presentation and relevant information as an update on previous presentations and as the strategy moves towards BCP Cabinet adoption.

Voting: Unanimous

28. Heathland Mitigation funding

The Portfolio Holder for the Environment 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. The Committee was advised that Heathland Mitigation is an important policy with a long-standing planning context that enables development across BCP, where nearly all development sites are within 5Km of internationally protected heathlands.

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Examples of Heathland Infrastructure Projects were given that use developer contributions to mitigate the impact of housing on Dorset's lowland heaths.

Mitigation funding comes from CIL and is ringfenced. The Council can improve what was currently being done by increasing SANG provision to get an overview of where green space is. There will be balancing of who currently uses SANGS and who will use them. To be classed as a SANG the land needs to be 30 hectares or more. The Council were looking at innovative ways for people to travel to SANGS to cut down on car usage.

RESOLVED that Members review the information in the report.

Voting: Unanimous

29. Work Plan

The Senior Democratic and Overview and Scrutiny Officer 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 Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee was asked to consider and identify work priorities for publication in a Work Plan.

There was a scrutiny request received regarding active travel. In response to this, as there was already an existing Council working group, the Committee agreed to refer this issue directly to the working group and asked it to provide a response back to the Committee for it to consider.

Further to the budget scrutiny workshops held, the Overview and Scrutiny Board made the following recommendations to the Environment and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee which were all agreed by the Committee to add to the work programme:

1. The committee add to its work programme an officer report relating to the Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP), when available, in order that the committee can understand and comment on the direction provided to the council and the steps that the council should take upon receipt of the LAEP.
2. The committee continue to explore ways in which it can contribute to and support the council in reaching its net zero targets by 2030, to be informed by the LAEP report. This may include deep dive scrutiny into a range of areas that will have the most impact on reaching the council's net zero targets, such as the council's fleet of vehicles, housing, energy supply and the council's procurement strategy.
3. The O&S committee add to its work programme a deep dive exploring options to progress community owned renewable energy working in partnership with the council.
4. The committee note that officers plan to develop a Temporary Accommodation Strategy and that the committee add this to its work plan to provide O&S engagement in the strategy at the appropriate time.

It was agreed by the Committee to hold an enquiry day regarding community owned renewable energy working in partnership with the Council and invite external bodies to participate.

Safer Accommodation Strategy – the Chair encouraged members of the Committee to put themselves forward for the working group. It was requested that members putting themselves forward were passionate about the topic. The group will be formed and will report back at a future meeting.

The Committee were informed that the Overview and Scrutiny Board did have the Local Transport Plan on their work plan but this has been transferred to Environment and Place and will be added to the work plan.

RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee review, update and confirm its Work Plan.

Voting: Unanimous

30. Future Meeting Dates

Date of the next meeting is Wednesday 25 February 2025.

The meeting ended at 8.32 pm

CHAIRMAN