

DORSET COUNCIL - PLACE AND RESOURCES OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 17 DECEMBER 2020

Present: Cllrs Daryl Turner (Chairman), Les Fry (Vice-Chairman), Pauline Batstone, Ryan Hope, Sherry Jespersen, Carole Jones, Val Potheary, Andrew Starr, Roland Tarr and David Taylor

Apologies: None

Also present: Cllr Shane Bartlett, Cllr Cherry Brooks, Cllr Ray Bryan, Cllr Beryl Ezzard, Cllr Nick Ireland, Cllr Rebecca Knox, Cllr Nocturin Lacey-Clarke, Cllr Andrew Parry, Cllr Molly Rennie, Cllr Jane Somper, Cllr David Walsh and Cllr Peter Wharf

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

John Sellgren (Executive Director, Place), Jonathan Mair (Corporate Director - Legal & Democratic Service Monitoring Officer), Matthew Piles (Corporate Director - Economic Growth and Infrastructure), Jack Wiltshire (Head of Highways), Michael Potter (Road Safety Manager), David Clegg (Service Manager for Network Operations), Michael Westwood (Community Highways Manager), Deborah Smart (Corporate Director – Digital & Change), Lisa Trickey (Service Manager for Digital Strategy and Design), James Potten (Communications Business Partner - Place) and Lindsey Watson (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

18. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2020 were agreed as a correct record and would be signed by the Chairman at a later date.

19. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

20. Chairman's Update

There were no updates from the Chairman of the committee.

21. Public Participation

Two statements were received from the public and local organisations and had been made available to the committee and on the council's website in advance of the meeting.

A copy of the statements are set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

22. **Developing Dorset's Digital Vision**

The committee received a report of the Corporate Director Digital and Change with regard to the draft digital vision for Dorset Council. The report set out the many areas of activity and the committee was asked to support the development of the Digital Vision and through reviewing the areas of focus from the Digital and ICT Executive Advisory Panel (EAP), assist with the development of an action plan to support its delivery. It was noted that a further report would be brought to the committee in February 2021 once the work had been completed, to subsequently recommend the adoption of the digital vision and action plan by Cabinet in April 2021.

An overview of the work was provided by the Corporate Director and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Development and Change.

Councillors discussed the issues arising from the report and particular reference was made to the need for further review of the council's website, arrangements for monitoring once the vision had been agreed, links with external partners and connectivity issues including work required with hard to reach areas. The committee welcomed the report and the work that had been undertaken.

It was proposed by L Fry seconded by C Jones

Decision

That the Place and Resources Overview Committee:

1. Has reviewed the work of the Digital and ICT EAP and the draft digital vision.
2. Supports the development of Dorset's Digital Vision, with comments as made at the meeting.
3. Highlights potential key priorities from the digital vision as follows so that these can be developed into a delivery plan for the next 2 years, 2021 – 2023:

Need for review of the Dorset Council website including the search engine;
Recognise the need for quality digital infrastructure for all and the need to pay attention to those not connected;
Need to raise digital skills;
Ensure the council makes the best use of data and intelligence and use of the performance management system to measure success.
4. Will review the final versions of the digital vision and action plan at the February 2021 meeting of the committee and subject to any

final changes then, will consider recommending the adoption of the Digital Vision and action plan to Cabinet in April 2021.

23. 20 mph Speed Limit Approach

The committee considered a report which set out the council's approach to 20 mph speed limit in urban areas and village streets. The Chairman confirmed that the purpose of the report was to consider the process followed by the council and not the circumstances with regard to individual issues and locations.

The committee discussed the report and support was noted for the council continuing to follow Department for Transport guidance but for there to be a review of how the guidance was interpreted by the council. Other points raised included consideration of the role of the Highways Board, the role of town and parish councils and the need to consider good environments.

It was proposed by S Jespersen seconded by R Tarr

Decision

That the Place and Resources Overview Committee support the following:

1. To continue to follow Department for Transport guidance and criteria for setting speed limits.
2. To continue to develop the initial Draft Guidance at Appendix C of the report, on the principles and criteria for 20mph limits and to enable officers and members to assess and prioritise requests objectively through the Highways Board; returning the final version to this committee at a later date.

24. Utilising Powers under the Traffic Management Act

The committee received a report of the Head of Highways which set out Dorset Council's approach for delivering the relevant requirements of the Traffic Management Act 2004.

It was proposed by R Tarr seconded by L Fry

Decision

That the Place and Resources Overview Committee support Dorset Council's approach for delivering the relevant requirements of the Traffic Management Act 2004.

25. Winter Maintenance Policy

The committee received a report of the Community Highways Manager which sought the committee's support for a decision taken by the Portfolio Holder for

Highways, Travel and Environment on 12 August 2020, in respect of the adoption of the revised Winter maintenance policy and operational plan.

Councillors discussed the issues arising from the report and particular reference was made to the change from area based to route based forecasting and the benefits that this brought.

It was proposed by R Tarr seconded by L Fry.

Decision

That the Place and Resources Overview Committee support the following action, in line with the decision of the Portfolio holder on the 12th August 2020: adoption of the revised Winter maintenance policy and operational plan.

26. Place and Resources Overview Committee Forward Plan

Councillors reviewed the draft forward plan for the committee. The Chairman noted that he would be meeting with the Executive Director of Place in order to consider potential areas for review by the committee and he welcomed suggestions from councillors.

27. Urgent items

There were no urgent items.

28. Exempt Business

There was no exempt business.

CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS

The Chairman thanked members of the committee and officers for their support during the year.

APPENDIX 1 - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. Statement received on behalf of the members of Purbeck Transport Action Group, which represents town and parish councils in Purbeck

Dear Councillors,

This statement is submitted on behalf of the members of Purbeck Transport Action Group, which represents town and parish councils in Purbeck.

There are several villages in Purbeck campaigning for 20mph. Some have had their submissions turned down, on the basis that they do not meet DfT criteria. Since DfT issue Guidance, not Instructions, it is up to Councils to decide on the overall merits of each case. Take the matter of collisions: currently, only accidents recorded by the police are considered. This is likely

to lead to a false conclusion that a village is safe. Account should surely be taken of minor unreported accidents. Measures should be introduced before accidents occur not wait until after they happen.

It is a generally held view that, when it comes to 20 mph, a negative culture exists in Highways. It is as though Highways are not listening to the real concerns of those who live in our villages, whose lives are blighted by speeding traffic. The impact on the quality of life and local support should be important factors in weighing the strength of a 20-mph case. The criteria matrix before you, takes no account of this important factor.

Appendix C of the paper states that 20 mph will not be considered on A or B class roads. This is NOT national policy.

There is a gathering momentum throughout the country to halt or mitigate an ever-increasing volume and speed of traffic.

Public Health England, in their 2016 Paper, Working Together to promote Active Travel says, 'There is growing evidence on the benefits of 20 mph'. They single out transport planners as key to delivering various benefits, including lowering speeds in villages.

The Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, in his Autumn statement made a point of singling out 'less traffic' as a way of ensuring that communities lead healthy and happy lives. He has made £60 billion available so that transport planners can, among other things, lower speeds in villages.

To quote the Chancellor, "People and their Views Matter"

20 is already a national issue. Now is Dorset's chance to get ahead of the game. Supporting the introduction of 20 can make a huge difference to the lives of people, particularly in villages, where safety and quality of life are adversely affected.

20 mph limits are relatively low cost and can be self-enforcing, through Community Speed Watch, which is supported by the police. Credit should be given to those villages that have a speed watch team. Where funding is an issue, villages could be given the opportunity of self-funding.

By introducing a positive and well-balanced 20 mph policy, you can make a huge difference to residents of Purbeck.

2. Statement received from Brenda Mustoe on behalf of Winfrith and East Knighton Parish Council

On behalf of Winfrith and East Knighton Parish Council we would like to thank Dorset Council for producing discussion papers related to the introduction of 20 mph limits.

We are concerned that when it comes to Priority Weighting there are significant factors that do not seem to fit any of the criteria.

Examples of these are:

Density of housing and access to facilities such as village halls, schools, shops, recreation grounds and churches, The number of listed buildings abutting the road which are affected by vibrations, Age profile of the community, Whether there is a pavement, Quality of life and environmental factors - should fit the climate change agenda.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 - 11.14 am

Chairman

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