

PLACE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 30 JULY 2024

Present: Cllrs Nocturin Lacey-Clarke (Chair), Alex Brenton, Neil Eysenck, Scott Florek, Rory Major, Andy Skeats, David Tooke and Sarah Williams

Present remotely: Cllrs Ray Bryan (Vice-Chair)

Apologies: Cllrs Emma Parker

Also present: Cllr Shane Bartlett, Cllr Nick Ireland and Cllr Craig Monks

Also present remotely: Cllr Sherry Jespersen

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

Jonathan Mair (Director of Legal and Democratic and Monitoring Officer), Matthew Piles (Corporate Director - Economic Growth and Infrastructure), Antony Littlechild (Sustainability Team Manager), Carl Warom (Climate and Ecology Policy Officer), Harriet Hallett (BI and Performance Business Partner - Corporate Strategy, Performance and Sustainability), Chris Swain (Risk Management and Reporting Officer), Lindsey Watson (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and John Miles (Democratic Services Officer)

1. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2. **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **Chair's Update**

The Chair noted that after the close of the formal meeting, councillors would discuss the timing of future meetings.

4. **Public Participation**

There were no questions or statements from members of the public or local organisations.

5. **Questions from Councillors**

There were no questions from councillors.

6. Trial reduction in car park charges

The committee considered a report of the Corporate Director Economic Growth and Infrastructure which provided detail of the decision process relating to the trial of reduced car park tariffs in three level 3 car parks. The Chair noted that the item related to how the decision was made and not the detail of the trial, which would be subject to future review.

Councillors considered the detail of the report and during the discussion the following points were noted:

- Consideration of the financial implications associated with the trial and the basis on which these were used in the decision-making process
- Data was being monitored and income and revenue implications would be reviewed at the end of the trial period
- In response to a question about the level of certainty the council could have with regard to the accuracy of the budget implications and predicted figures, the Corporate Director Economic Growth and Infrastructure noted that confidence could be around 80% as there was a need to take things such as weather fluctuations into account, and as such, a particular outcome could not be promised
- A point was noted about the reference in the decision notice to £100k to be taken from the lead member allowances, and it was confirmed that this should have read as £60k on the decision notice, which reflected the provision for six lead members in the Constitution. An assurance was sought that a public correction of the figure would be made and that figures be checked in future before decisions were made
- The decision to include the Swannery car park in Weymouth was raised and a point made that the car park was seen as a tourist car park rather than one used by local residents and whether this would affect the trial due to the time of year the trial was taking place
- Consideration was given to how the success of the trial could be judged and it was noted that businesses, residents, local councillors and local councils would be consulted
- The use of key performance indicators (KPIs) was also flagged and the suggestion made that a working group could be set up to assist with developing KPIs
- Consideration of any new policy in this area would be reviewed by the overview committee and Cabinet. Scrutiny of the success of the trial would be considered by this committee.

Following the discussion, the Chair provided a summary of the key points covered as follows:

- Clarification had been received in respect of the figures used in the decision notice and the Chair asked that a correction of the figures be sent out to media outlets, in addition to the clarification provided in the minutes of the meeting
- The suggestion to form a working group to consider KPIs would be discussed with the Cabinet Member for Place Services

- A report to the committee was requested following the end of the trial period to scrutinise the outcome
- The parking review as a whole would be reported through the Place and Resources Overview Committee.

7. **Natural Environment, Climate and Ecology: Progress Report - Summer 2024**

The committee received a report of the Climate and Ecology Policy Officer, to review progress made in delivering the natural environment, climate and ecology strategy during 2023/24.

Councillors considered the issues arising from the report and during discussion the following points were noted:

- The impact of the nature emergency declaration would need to be considered
- Good progress had been made in embedding climate issues through the Council and thanks noted to officers and the former portfolio holder for their work in this area
- More detailed information including figures would be available in a dashboard that was being developed and would be brought to the committee at a future meeting. The committee could then consider the information included and if further information was required
- Specific points were noted in respect of prioritising wi-fi in rural areas, Dorset community transport, the installation of heat pumps and climate issues around agriculture
- The implications of bringing dates forward for the Council and wider area to become carbon neutral were considered and in particular the cost implications of this. A report would be considered by Cabinet in respect of this and clarification was being sought on the democratic process and timescales for this.

The Chair noted the requirement for a report to be considered before Cabinet in November 2024, to consider the plan and costings associated with bringing forward the dates for the Council and wider area to become carbon neutral. He also welcomed the development of the dashboard to provide more information.

8. **Performance Scrutiny**

The BI and Performance Business Partner provided an overview of the new performance dashboard for the committee, which continued to be developed.

The committee considered the performance dashboard and highlighted some areas of interest. These included:

- The dashboard would need to reflect the new Dorset Council Plan priorities, which were being developed
- Opportunities for training on the use of the dashboard could be investigated, to include a mix of session types
- Improved access to information on direction of travel could be added

- Work was being undertaken to further build the performance culture and ownership of performance across the council
- Further information on indicators relating to % of FOI requests answered on time across the council was requested and a report suggested for the November meeting.

9. **Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee Work Programme**

Councillors reviewed the draft work programme for the committee for 2024/25 and legacy items put forward by the committee prior to the Dorset Council election in May 2024.

The following items would be added to the work programme at an appropriate point:

- Strategic Asset Management Plan – post Cabinet decision review (Cabinet decision due in October 2024)
- Dog Related Public Spaces Protection Order – Review of the changes to Lyme Regis Front Beach – working group to be formed
- Planning Enforcement – review of existing policy and outcome of recent internal audit
- Housing delivery targets and 5-year land supply – hold as waiting for Government guidance which would affect the new Local Plan
- Dorset Council Commercial Strategy – hold until new Strategic Asset Management Plan has been agreed
- Community Asset Transfer Policy – post decision review
- A briefing note to be produced on the roles of overview and scrutiny at Dorset Council and how this was applied to the Local Plan
- Staff sickness and turnover
- Revenues and Benefits service – to review information following external audits to decide if further review is required
- Review following car parking charges trial – including suggestion of a working group to develop key performance indicators to be discussed with Cllr Andrews
- Coombe House – finance and original business case.

10. **Executive Arrangements Forward Plans**

Councillors considered the Cabinet Forward Plan, which the committee could use to identify potential areas for post decision review.

In addition, the committee noted the forward plan for the Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Ltd and the Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Centre of Excellence.

11. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

12. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 am - 12.56 pm

Chairman

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