

PLACE AND RESOURCES OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 6 JUNE 2023

Present: Cllrs Carole Jones (Chairman), Les Fry (Vice-Chairman), Tony Alford, Toni Coombs, Ryan Hope, Sherry Jespersen, Val Potheary, Maria Roe and Andrew Starr

Also present: Cllr Laura Beddow

Also present remotely: Cllr Cherry Brooks and Cllr Ray Bryan

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

John Sellgren (Executive Director, Place), Aidan Dunn (Executive Director - Corporate Development S151), Jonathan Mair (Director of Legal and Democratic and Monitoring Officer), Janet Moore (Service Manager Environmental Protection), Graham Duggan (Head of Community & Public Protection), Chris Matthews (Interim Head of HR), Lindsey Watson (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and John Miles (Democratic Services Officer Apprentice)

1. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 April 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2. **Declarations of interest**

C Jones, S Jespersen, R Hope, M Roe and L Fry each indicated that in respect of agenda item 7 'Dog Related Public Spaces Protection Order 2024 – Public Consultation Requirement', as a dog owner and following advice from the Monitoring Officer, they had been granted a dispensation, to allow them to take part in discussion and voting on the item.

L Beddow noted that she was not a member of the committee but indicated that in respect of agenda item 7 'Dog Related Public Spaces Protection Order 2024 – Public Consultation Requirement', as a dog owner and following advice from the Monitoring Officer, she had been granted a dispensation in relation to the item.

3. **Chairman's Update**

The Chairman provided a summary of an update provided by the ICT Project Manager in respect of progress with the Digital Infrastructure Strategy. The full wording of the update is included at Appendix 1.

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. **Dog Related Public Spaces Protection Order 2024 - Public Consultation Requirement**

The committee received and considered a report of the Service Manager Environmental Protection which sought the support of the committee for the provision of a Dog Related Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) from the expiration of the current Order on 31 December 2023, either by extension of the existing Order or by the introduction of a new Order. The Council was required to carry out a public consultation in respect of this and the committee was invited to consider and comment of the content of the draft public consultation document.

Councillors considered the issues arising from the report and the draft public consultation document and comments were made in the following areas:

- Need for clarification of the meaning of 'irresponsible dog ownership' in the report/draft consultation document.
- Restrictions relating to the timing and location for the exercise of dogs on Weymouth beach to be included as part of the consultation.
- Enforcement issues were considered and what alternative support the council may be able to provide to communities, particularly those in rural areas.
- Issues relating to dog fouling were required to be included in the public consultation as a requirement of being included in the Order.
- The wording of questions would be discussed and confirmed with the council's Legal Services Team where clarification or definition was required.
- The consultation end date would be confirmed following the meeting.
- Dog fouling was monitored in particular areas and additional resource was available to monitor in areas where dog fouling was occurring.
- A request was made for paper copies of the consultation document to be made available in locations such as hub offices and community facilities.
- The PSPO focused on spaces such as sports pitches and parks and not pavements.
- Issues around the provision of dog waste bins and associated signage were discussed and resource issues were noted. A suggestion was made that these issues should be reviewed in future.
- Comments were made around how signage could be improved and would be reviewed following the meeting.
- Request for wording of explanation to be included at question 2b (Is this an official response?).
- Questions relating to restrictions at Studland would be reviewed following the meeting.

- The wording of question 11 regarding restriction times would be reviewed following the meeting.
- The council was keen to work with town and parish councils on training in this area and to have authorised officers where possible and further awareness raising of the consultation generally would be undertaken.
- A review of the achievements of the current PSPO would be included in the next committee report (October).
- Issues around dogs worrying agricultural livestock were considered.
- The committee asked that the information provided on the council's website be reviewed in order to bring all information together into one area.

Following the consultation period, a further report would be brought to the committee on 5 October 2023 to discuss the findings and to recommend the agreement of the draft Order by Cabinet.

7. **Place and Resources Overview Committee Work Programme**

Councillors noted the committee's work programme and items scheduled for the next meeting. In addition, councillors noted the Cabinet Forward Plan.

An informal meeting was to be arranged for committee members to review the committee work programme.

8. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

9. **Exempt Business**

It was proposed by L Fry seconded by S Jespersen.

Decision

That the press and the public be excluded for the following item in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

The Chairman closed the public part of the meeting and the live stream of the meeting ended.

10. **Approach to engaging our temporary workforce - Exempt**

The committee considered an exempt report of the Head of Human Resources which sought support for an approach to engaging the council's temporary workforce.

The committee considered the issues arising from the report and following discussion it was proposed by S Jespersen seconded by A Alford that the report be deferred in order for a number of questions to be addressed before consideration by Cabinet.

As an amendment it was proposed by S Jespersen seconded by A Alford that the report be deferred in order for a number of questions to be addressed before being brought back to this committee either at the next meeting or at an additional meeting of the committee to be confirmed.

S Jespersen provided clarification as to the issues to be addressed and brought back to the committee.

T Coombs asked whether an amendment could be put that the report be considered by Cabinet with the concerns of this committee highlighted for consideration. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that this was not an acceptable amendment.

In respect of the timing for consideration of the report, the Executive Director of Corporate Development indicated that an additional meeting would allow Cabinet to consider the report at the meeting on 25 July 2023.

The committee discussed the amendment and upon being put to the vote the amendment was **CARRIED**.

Decision (Substantive)

That the report be deferred in order for a number of questions to be addressed before being brought back to this committee at an additional meeting of the committee to be confirmed.

It was noted that an additional meeting of the committee would be arranged to consider the report. A summary of the additional information requested would be sent to committee members for noting and any additions.

APPENDIX 1 - CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

Agenda item 4 – Chairman’s Update – Digital Infrastructure Strategy

Background:

- Digital Place presented to Overview Committee on 18 April regarding the development of a Dorset Digital Infrastructure Strategy
- Further consultation was proposed with the following groups:
 - Elected Members (Overview Committee)
 - Council Officers
 - Local Community and Business
 - Suppliers (Mobile Network Operators / Network Infrastructure Providers)
 - Young People (Youth Council / Youth Parliament)
- Digital Place undertook to provide a Chair’s Briefing for the June Committee Meeting before presenting a strategy document to the July meeting of Cabinet for adoption.

Progress:

- The strategy will be **underpinned by all five key priorities** in the Council plan
- The following digital themes have been highlighted:

- Broadband
- Mobile
- Digital Innovation
- Smart places
- Access and Inclusion
- Net Zero

Each will be described in detail in the strategy with strategic objectives included alongside appropriate measurements. The digital infrastructure strategy will be evidence and data led.

- The **Elected Members' Workshop** was run at County Hall on 22 May.
 - 4 Elected Members from Overview Committee attended
 - The context (national and local), government guidance, local challenges and opportunities relating to Dorset's Digital Infrastructure Strategy were explored.
 - Each opportunity was discussed and rated on a risk / reward matrix to identify priorities.
 - The ratings matrices and other notes / comments on post-it notes were recorded to inform the development of the Infrastructure Strategy
- The **Digital Place team** contributed their thoughts on the Digital Infrastructure Strategy during their team meeting on 23 May – feedback on opportunities / priorities has been combined with the output from the elected members' briefing
- **Council Officers** were invited to a workshop at County Hall on 26 May
- A venue has been booked for the **local community and business workshop** on 16 June
- The **Youth Service** have been consulted to determine the best route to engaging young people with the consultation. Feedback / recommendation awaited at time of writing
- An **online supplier workshop** is planned.
- Feedback from all of the above will combine to create the draft Digital Infrastructure Strategy for adoption in July

Summary of emerging themes so far:

- The strategy needs to differentiate between those things within the control of Council, understanding where we can:
 - Take **direct** action
 - Take **indirect** action and look at how services across the council can impact positively
 - **Influence and engage** through partnership to ensure commercial provision is maximised
- Opportunities to **engage earlier and more positively** with network providers to set conditions for successful deployment should be pursued
- Central Government guidance is strongly in favour of **local authorities supporting digital infrastructure providers** activities, which **may not be reflected in Dorset Council's current approach**
- The **benefits of connectivity and risks of digital exclusion** are not currently as well represented or understood during the planning consultation process as the concerns of those tasked with protecting the natural and built environment.

- **Imaginative approaches** such as commissioning an attractive / iconic 'Dorset Mobile Communications Mast' and subsidising it's cost to enhance the landscape and support providers in improving mobile phone network coverage should be explored with planners / suppliers and local communities.
- **Taking a more commercial approach** such as exploring council owned assets delivered through commercial partnership

Climate change strategy – contributing to net zero and carbon reduction through delivery of the Digital infrastructure Strategy.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 am - 12.02 pm

Chairman

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