

PLACE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2024

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

Present remotely: Cllrs Emma Parker

Apologies: Cllrs Rory Major

Also present: Cllr Jon Andrews, Cllr Shane Bartlett, Cllr Belinda Bawden, Cllr Richard Biggs, Cllr Peter Dickenson, Cllr Nick Ireland, Cllr Craig Monks, Cllr Louie O'Leary and Cllr Andrew Parry

Also present remotely: Cllr Laura Beddow, Cllr Simon Gibson, Cllr Barry Goringe, Cllr Sherry Jespersen, Cllr Byron Quayle and Cllr Jane Somper

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

Jan Britton (Executive Director for Places Services), Aidan Dunn (Executive Director - Corporate Development S151), Matthew Piles (Corporate Director - Strategic Director - Weymouth 2040), Lindsey Watson (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Antony Bygrave (Senior Assurance Officer - Complaints), Antony Littlechild (Sustainability Team Manager), Antony Nash (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Connor Pearson (Carbon Management Officer), Michael Westwood (Service Manager for Parking Services) and James Potten (Communications Business Partner - Place)

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

Steven Ford (Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Sustainability) and Carl Warom (Climate and Ecology Policy Officer)

24. **Apologies**

Cllrs Rory Major

25. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24th October 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

26. **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

27. **Public Participation**

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

28. **Questions from Councillors**

There were no questions from Councillors.

29. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

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

Councillors reviewed the Committee's work programme.

31. **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.

32. **Risk Management**

The committee requested a confidential briefing to address items on the council risk register and assurance following the briefing to be shared at a future meeting of the Place and Resource Scrutiny Committee.

33. **Corporate Complaints Team Annual Report 2023-24**

The Place and Resources Scrutiny committee considered the report presented by the Complaints manager which provided an update on the numbers, types and outcomes of complaints made against Dorset Council during 2023/24. The performance of place services was covered in detail and the importance of receiving complaints to ongoing council performance.

The discussion covered much of the data shared and offered suggestions for additions for deeper understanding along with other considerations

- How complaints are categorised and the definition of a complaint
- Complaints in relation to statutory services vs other services was discussed
- Possible performance measures in terms of impact and improvement, e.g. lower numbers of complaints, improved timescales
- The use of comparison data in relation to other council's complaints
- The remedies to complaints and key learning in improving service delivery and performance

The Committee suggested a reduction in complaints upheld by the Ombudsmen as a key performance metric and the addition of comparison data to future reports.

34. **Natural Environment, Climate and Ecology: Progress Report - Autumn/Winter 2024**

The Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee considered the second Biannual progress report for 2024 shared by the Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate, Performance and Safeguarding, compiled by Sustainability Team Manager, Carbon Management Officer, and Climate & Ecology Policy Officer. The report provided a quantitative overview of progress on our emissions trajectory and performance against our current emissions targets.

There was an extensive discussion following the presentation that covered several areas;

- Value for money and assessing climate impact in terms of cost-effectiveness, impact and the availability of data locally and globally, funding sources and financial commitments for projects.
- A discussion exploring hydrogen and alternative fuels including hydrogen generation and alternative fuel use in practice.
- A discussion of the actions that have positive benefits from alternative fuels, solar PV, building retrofits, and electric vehicles usage and infrastructure.
- A discussion about working closely with agriculture addressing methane emissions and supporting ongoing agricultural work.
- A discussion about reaching wider audiences that extend beyond the council's direct control so engagement with schools, partners, and organisations in unified climate actions beyond the areas we have direct control.
- The role of the council in providing impartial climate advice to support organisations and residents to reduce their carbon emissions.
- A discussion about resilience and incorporating broader climate impacts like flood prevention and resilience.

The chair summarised the discussion and requested an expansion of the data, including data from wider Dorset, to be collated for the next update and recognised the work that has happened so far.

35. **Trial reduction in Car Park Charges**

The report introduced by the Cabinet member for place services and presented by the Corporate Director Economic Growth & Infrastructure covered a trial of reduced car park tariffs was conducted in three level 3 car parks. The report detailed the impact of the trial on parking usage, income and the customer feedback, and the impact on visits and businesses. Other factors such as weather were also considered and highlighted as important to be considered.

Following the presentation, there was discussion about the trial sites and the variance between the sites and how this trial formed part of a larger full review of parking. The discussion covered several specific areas such as;

- Sources of funding for the trial, and the rationale behind the selection of the trial sites.

- The Impact of the trial on residents compared to tourists.
- The data in terms of its impact on businesses and footfall were investigated and required additional emphasis for the full parking review.
- The statistical significance of the impact of the trial particularly in relation to local business impact and footfall.

The discussion concluded that the ability to prove significance in terms of impact was inconclusive with the data available. The chair requested the progress around the full parking review was shared with the committee.

36. **Exempt Business**

The Committee did not go into exempt business on this occasion.

37. **Trial Reduction in Car Park Charges- Exempt Appendix**

This item was not discussed.

Duration of meeting: 6.30 - 8.43 pm

Chairman

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