

CLEANER & GREENER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2020 commencing at 5.00 pm

Present: Cllr. McArthur (Chairman)

Cllr. Carroll (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Andrews, Bayley, Dr. Canet, Collins, G. Darrington, Griffiths and Raikes

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Barnett and Foster

Cllr. Dickins was also present.

24. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the Cleaner & Greener Advisory Committee held on 29 October 2019 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

25. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Raikes declared for reasons of transparency that he had been lobbied in respect of Minute 34 - Sevenoaks Parking Review and that he was also a Member of Sevenoaks Town Council, who currently had the contract for the town market in relation to Minute 35 - Budget 2021/22: Review of Service Dashboards and Service Change Impact Assessments

26. Actions from Previous Meeting

There were none.

27. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder, and Chairman introduced Trevor Kennett who was the new Head of Direct Services.

During lockdown Officers had been put under additional pressures and taken on different roles to help residents. The Portfolio Holder expressed her thanks to the teams for taking on the extra duties, working long hours and for everyone rising to the challenges before them.

Moving forward, a campaign raising awareness of the hazards of car idling was being created with a project plan and signage banners, particularly aimed at schools that were near air quality management areas. Schools had been written to,

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to see if there was interest in assisting with the project and the wider health benefits. Environmental Health would work with Parking Services regarding a wider educational car idling campaign going forward, and an application for funding from DEFRA had been submitted.

Members were advised that the air quality draft report management was being checked over by the Scientific Officer, and the report would be brought to a future meeting.

28. Referral from Cabinet or the Audit committee

There were none.

29. Net Zero 2030 Update October 2020

The Principal Planning Officer (Planning Policy) introduced the report which updated Members on the ongoing work to achieve Net Zero 2030, following the agreement of Council to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. A Cabinet Working Group was set up and met in February 2020 and an Officer Working Group was also set up to support the Cabinet Working Group. Members' attention was brought to table 1 in the report which set out the immediate actions and commitments with an update on the progress of those actions. There had also been progress on longer term stage 2 actions, and those which had significant progress were shown in table 2.

The Policy Officer advised that the Local Government Association Innovation Programme brought together councils and universities to develop a practical project to address local net zero challenges. Officers had submitted a proposal that focuses on how to engage rural communities in Net Zero.

In response to questions Members were advised that the current electrical charging policy was from the Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP) and the emerging local plan went further for more and improved charging points.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

30. Service Update: Direct Services

The Head of Direct Services presented the report which updated Members on the service delivery from March to September 2020 for Direct Services. He advised that services were continuing to be delivered successfully despite Covid-19 restrictions.

In response to questions Members were advised that the Countryside & Open Spaces team worked closely with the Forestry Commission particularly with identifying Ash dieback. A tree strategy would be brought to Committee in 2021. Members discussed Bradbourne Lakes and were advised that currently the Heritage Lottery Fund had suspended funding for new projects until 2021 and as a result only the day to day management around the lakes could be carried out.

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Members expressed their thanks to the teams for their tremendous effort at continuing to provide an excellent service to residents.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

31. Service Update: Car Parking

The Parking Manager presented the report which updated Members on the service delivery from March to September 2020 for Parking Services. Members were informed that following the national lockdown, the Council made all of its public car parks and on-street parking facilities 'free of charge.' Parking enforcement remained in place, particularly around Knole Estate. The Civil Enforcement Officers were also delivering emergency food parcels around the district to those residents who were most in need during lockdown, with the Administration Officers helping to co-ordinate the deliveries.

In response to questions Members were advised that enforcement against cars that park on pavements could only be carried out by the Police. Members were advised that there were roads close to Sevenoaks Town where there was 2 hours free parking available.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

32. Annual Review of Parking Management 2021/22

The Parking Manager presented the report which sought approval for the freeze on all parking charges across the district. In light of the impact that the Covid-19 pandemic has had on parking supply and demand for parking across the district, the proposed freeze would help support local businesses and economies, stabilising services over the next 12 months.

It was suggested that due to the extra capacity in the Bradbourne Car Park, a charge reduction could be considered to encourage commuters to use that particular car park.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that:

- a) the parking management proposals for a freeze on all parking charges for 2021/22 be agreed; and
- b) a charge reduction be considered to encourage commuters to use Bradbourne Car Park.

33. Christmas Parking 2020

The Parking Manager reported that free parking was proposed in Sevenoaks town and Westerham on the two weekends leading up to Christmas in December 2020. Vehicles would still be required to observe a maximum parking time and regular monitoring would take place to ensure this is complied with. The maximum stay in Blighs Car Park on the two weekends would also be reduced from 4 hours to 3 hours.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that:

- a) the proposal for free parking in Sevenoaks town and Westerham on Saturday 12 December 2020, Sunday 13 December 2020, Saturday 19 December 2020 and Sunday 20 December 2020 be provided; and
- b) it be recommended to Council that the cost of in terms of loss of income for free parking be met from Supplementary Estimates.

34. Sevenoaks Parking Review

The Parking Manager presented the report which informed Members of the findings of the Sevenoaks parking review carried out between October 2019 and January 2020. The review recommended that where parking issues had been identified, that reasonable and proportionate measures be taken to improve parking management arrangements. The review also recommended that no further action at this stage be taken in locations where feedback indicated that no significant parking issues exist. It was acknowledged that some areas had more complex parking issues which could need further investigation. It was also proposed that new measures to help support low paid local workers and improve the benefits that existing zones provided to residents.

The Parking Manager further advised that there needed to be a balance for resident and non-resident permits and “exclusive” resident only schemes did not fall under Kent County Council’s guidelines. By looking at some of the boundaries for the parking zones this would provide greater flexibility for resident parking. During the construction of Sevenoaks Town Car Park, permit holders were parking in other areas including in underused resident permit zones, due to many of the houses having off-street parking. It was hoped by offering low paid workers a reduced cost permit to park in these areas, (generally at the top of St Botolphs Road) this would support the local economy.

In response to questions, Members were advised that the resident parking schemes were designed to meet an original parking need and that residents in new builds and conversions were not therefore eligible to park in the existing schemes.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that:

- a) the ratio of resident and non-resident permits be adjusted to help ensure that parking availability is maximised throughout the day;
- b) the period of no return in all parking bays in zone A be increased from 1 hour to 4 hours;
- c) “no return” to all roads in Zone A, until the 4-hour no return period has passed;
- d) rationalising boundaries and eligibility to maximise convenience and accessibility for residents be reviewed; and
- e) Non-resident on-street parking permits to low paid workers at a reduced rate, where spare capacity exists, be offered.

35. Budget 2021/22: Review of Service Dashboards and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs)

The Deputy Chief Executive & Chief Officer - Finance & Trading, presented the report which set out updates to the 2021/22 budget within the existing framework of the 10-year budget and savings plan. The report presented growth and savings items that had been identified which needed to be considered, and requested further suggestions from Members, before finalising the budget for 2021/22.

Informed by the latest information from Government and discussions with Cabinet, it was proposed that the Council continued to set a revenue budget that assumed no direct funding from Government through the Revenue Support Grant or New Homes Bonus. This would result in the Council continuing to be financially self-sufficient. To achieve this aim and to ensure a balanced budget position over the next 10-year period would be more challenging this year due to the financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The budget process would be shorter with the Council’s budget set at the November Council meeting instead of the February Council meeting. This should enable any changes to be implemented before 1 April 2021 and minimise the period of uncertainty for staff.

The annual budget gap included in the report was £826,000 which was largely due to Covid-19. Growth and savings proposals had been identified in the report for this Committee but Members were asked for their suggestions in order to contribute to reducing the budget gap, and their recommendations would be considered by Cabinet as part of the process to set a balanced 10-year budget. By

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addressing the issues this year, the Council would once again be in a strong financial position that other councils would aspire to.

In response to questions Members were advised that the commercial income from new services (SCIA 10) would be from 2022/23 and would be where there is already a commercial market, by expanding the current domestic services already provided. Looking to the future for Direct Services, it was hoped that an Apprentice would be employed and there would be more training opportunities for staff to use the current resources more effectively. A report would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that the growth and saving proposals identified in Appendices F & G to the report (SCIAs 1 to 10 and 25) applicable to this Advisory Committee, be considered.

36. Work Plan

The work plan was noted with the following additions:

9 December 2020

Kent Biodiversity Strategy
Kent Energy and Low Emissions Strategy
Net Zero 2030 Carbon Emissions Update
Service Update: Environmental Health
Service Update: Licensing

19 January 2021

Air Quality
Net Zero 2030 Carbon Emissions Update

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 6.57 PM

CHAIRMAN