



Place Overview
Committee

9 November 2022

2.00 pm

Item

Public

**MINUTES OF THE PLACE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 29
SEPTEMBER 2022
2.00 PM – 3.50 PM**

Responsible Officer: Amanda Holyoak
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Present

Councillor Joyce Barrow (Chairman)
Councillors Steve Davenport (Vice Chairman), Julian Dean, Geoff Elner,
Roger Evans, Dan Morris, Pamela Moseley, Peggy Mullock, David Vasmer and
Paul Wynn

Ian Nellins, Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, Environment and Transport
was also present.

15 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies.

16 Disclosable Interests

None were declared

17 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2022 were confirmed as a correct
record.

18 Public Question Time

There were no public questions.

19 Member Question Time

There were no member questions.

The Committee agreed that as there were members of the public present with an interest in item 8 – New Housing Developments Task and Finish Group, that this item be considered next.

20 New Housing Developments Task and Finish Group Terms of Reference

The Scrutiny Officer reminded the committee of its discussions at its previous meeting, following submission of a Member question raising concerns about poor workmanship and incomplete public realm works on housing developments in the county. It had been agreed that a Task and Finish Group be set up to consider whether the Council had policy options that could minimise or mitigate these issues in future developments.

The establishment of the Group was welcomed by all members and during the discussion of draft terms of reference it was suggested that the contribution of residents to the group should be further enhanced, with opportunities provided for them to show members of the Group the issues first hand, rather than relying on tours provided by developers. It was also suggested that at least one additional developer be approached to participate in the work of the Group.

It was also suggested that: Cornovii Developments Ltd be asked to participate; Housing Associations be approached to share their experiences with developers; and that issues around adoption of roads and climate change measures be included in the work. Members felt it would be important to keep the terms of reference focused on finding ways for the Council to ensure developers delivered what they had agreed to.

It was agreed that the draft terms of reference and work programme be approved, taking into account the comments of the Committee set out above.

21 Waste Minimisation Strategy

The Chair welcomed Paul Beard, Waste Contracts Manager and Mark Foxall, Technical Support and Project Manager to the meeting who introduced the report on early proposals for a Waste Minimisation Strategy.

The report included a proposal to charge for green waste. Not every committee member agreed with this proposal. Some members noted that a recent Government Green Paper proposed to subsidise local authorities to not charge for green waste. Although this had yet to become policy, it was felt that any proposal from Shropshire Council should wait until the Government policy became clearer.

The report made the point that the free green waste collection was in part subsidised by residents who do not have gardens, and that an increase in the population of Shropshire would result in a greater cost for waste collection.

Members did not entirely accept these arguments, noting that many other council services were not used universally.

It was also noted that an increase in population would also result in an increase in council tax revenue. The Chair pointed out that the local authority could not charge to collect food waste, meaning that any proposal to charge for green waste would require an additional collection stream for food waste.

The report also contained a proposal to recruit two new members of staff to produce and put into action the proposed strategy. Some members approved of this proposal, and accepted that reductions in waste would result in a reduction in charges for waste going to landfill or to the energy recovery facility in Shrewsbury. Other members were more sceptical, and felt that residents would not agree to the local authority recruiting additional staff when finances were tight. Some members suggested a useful compromise might be to recruit staff on time-limited contracts in order to demonstrate their value in reducing costs.

Members felt that although agreement had not been reached on details within the report, it would be useful for Cabinet to hear at this stage that there was unanimous agreement for the principle of a Waste Minimisation Strategy from the Committee. It was also agreed that the Chair attend the next Cabinet meeting to report on the discussion held.

22 Parking Strategy

Steve Smith, Assistant Director Highways and Transport presented a report on proposals for a review of the Parking Strategy. He emphasised that proposals were at a very early stage and that this was an opportunity for the Committee to influence the scope of the review.

Committee discussion, comments and suggestions covered :

- The need for a review of extensions of pay and display schemes beyond town centres;
- The need for the review to cover on street and off street parking with a number of Members reporting on issues with on street parking in residential areas;
- Questions about finances and the £2.7m income generation for car parking set out the budget book and £1.6m internal recharges, and a request for more financial details – as net parking income had dropped due to activity not recovered after covid;
- The need to ensure economic viability of towns when reviewing different categories of car parks and need to understand that one solution would not fit all market towns and locations, with a need to do what was right in each location – a more dynamic approach was needed to reflect individual needs;
- The importance of including town and parish councils in the review
- The need to ensure early alignment with the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan and Movement Strategy which was progressing at pace
- Questions about the impact on the strategy and impact on rural bus services if the Levelling Up bid was not successful
- Actions not yet implemented from the original review should be part of the review and built into any new model.

The Assistant Director emphasised that the key driver for change was not to increase income, but to achieve modal change and cultural shifts. Further details of proposals and finances would emerge as the review progressed. He confirmed that there was not the capacity currently in the team to undertake the review and additional staff would be required.

A member asked how to go about obtaining a change to a bus route and the Assistant Director said he would contact her outside of the meeting with further information.

It was agreed to support the review of the current parking strategy being undertaken - covering the areas proposed in the report and taking into account the committee's input set out above. It was hoped there would be a further opportunity for scrutiny input before proposals were considered by Cabinet.

23 River Water Quality Task and Finish Group

Councillor Kate Halliday had been invited to attend the meeting to report on her work on river water quality to date. The Committee thanked her for highlighting the issue and agreed the proposed terms of reference for the River Water Quality task and Finish Group.

24 Place Overview Committee Work Programme

The Scrutiny Officer introduced proposals for the Committee’s work programme

With regard to road safety schemes, although an additional meeting had been agreed for October, he explained that the Communities Overview Committee had more capacity and a similar item running concurrently, so he recommended that this be referred to that committee to avoid any duplication. Following clarification that this did not include the 20mph limits outside schools scheme this was agreed.

Two further suggestions for the work programme were:

Stakeholder board on climate action – scrutiny of outcomes of that board

Nature recovery - in Spring 2023 once further clarification was issued by government.

The Committee asked that Cabinet be reminded of responses awaited on recommendations made in relation to assorted street scene matters, particularly in relation to signage, A Boards and pavement permits.

It was agreed that the chair would recommend to Cabinet that Shropshire Council make equal the consultation period for town and parish councils, and members of the public, for planning applications.

25 Date/Time of Next Meeting of the Committee

Thursday 10 November 2022 at 2pm.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: