

SHOPSHIRE COUNCIL

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2022
10.00 am - 1.00 pm in the Shrewsbury/Oswestry Room, Shirehall,
Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND**

Responsible Officer: Amanda Holyoak
Email: amanda.holyoak@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257714

Present

Councillor Claire Wild (Chairman)
Councillors Joyce Barrow (Vice Chairman), Julia Buckley, Steve Charmley,
Roger Evans, Robert Macey, Alan Mosley, Peggy Mullock, David Vasmer and
Leslie Winwood

30 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

There were no apologies for absence.

31 Disclosable Interests

None were declared.

32 Minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2021 were confirmed as a correct record.

33 Public Question Time

There were no public questions.

Two members of the public, Chris Lemon and Angela Warren, addressed the Committee regarding the petition submitted to the Council requesting that plans be brought forward to implement a county wide 20mph default speed limit in residential areas. They said that those who had signed felt that this would reduce casualties, improve the environment and was the most cost effective way of making improvement in road safety and accessibility for all in towns and villages. Councillor Julian Dean who was in attendance at the meeting echoed these comments and also referred to a Scrutiny 20mph Task and Finish Group which had previously looked into the matter but had not met in some time or reported on its findings.

Steve Brown Head of Transport and Infrastructure was invited to explain the Council's existing speed related policies and the background to them and the progress of implementation of 20mph limits outside of schools. He also

reported on ongoing work related to the Local Transport Plan including the cycling and walking infrastructure plan. He recalled scrutiny work conducted a number of years ago on a 20mph blanket requirement which had recommended that the existing policy should be retained. He also explained that the Council had a statutory responsibility to target where accidents were most frequent and data showed this was clearly on national speed limit roads on Friday and Saturdays after 4.30 pm involving drivers under the age of 25.

In responding to questions about progress of the 20mph limits outside schools he explained that some traffic surveys had been delayed due to the pandemic but that implementation would begin in the new financial year.

A member made a plea that 20 mph area speed limits, were considered for rural as well as urban areas. Some members felt that lack of enforcement by police was not a reason to halt implementation and felt that volunteers could be utilised as this was an issue in which communities were very much engaged.

A Member made a plea that market towns outside of Shrewsbury not be left until last and it was suggested that a holistic scheme be trialled across a market town to run alongside the work of the task and finish group, the learning from which could then be utilised.

Some members referred to schemes planned for their electoral divisions which had subsequently been cancelled. A Member asked how many applications had been put in place for 20mph schemes in local areas and how many had been put in place, the Head of Transport and Infrastructure said he would have to provide that information outside of the meeting.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Committee agreed that the 20mph Task and Finish Group be reconvened, with police involvement, to consider the most up to date evidence and data available and to provide a report to the Place Overview Committee.

34 Member Question Time

There were no member questions.

35 Petition presented to Full Council 23 September 2021

6. Petition submitted to Council 23 Sept 21

Following a request from the petitioner, Councillor Rachel Connelly, of Bridgnorth Town Council, Members considered the way in which the Council had considered her petition on closure of two depots serving the east of the county following its presentation at the Council meeting on 23 September

2021. The Council had resolved that further research and consultation be undertaken before a report was presented to Council or Cabinet (as appropriate) in due course.

The Committee Solicitor, explained the procedure in place for dealing with petitions presented at full council and the range of options available following the 15 minutes of debate. He was also asked to provide the definition in the constitution of a point of order.

Subsequent discussion and questions covered the number of points of order that could be raised; wording of the petition which had called on Members of the Council to vote on a course of action without further investigation; confusion at the meeting, and whether there was a need for training on council procedures, particularly in relation to petitions.

It had been agreed by the Council at the meeting that a report would be brought back to Cabinet or Council and members asked when this was likely to happen and when the petitioner would be informed. After voting on a number of proposals some asking that data showing impact of proposals be included in the future report and asking that members and the petitioner be informed of likely timescales, it was

RESOLVED that

Having reviewed the steps taken by the Council in relation to the petition, the PMSC is satisfied the petition was considered in accordance with the Council's petition scheme and any decision regarding the future of the depots will be brought forward to members for consideration with a full appraisal of all options available.

Councillor Roger Evans asked that it be noted in the minutes that he had voted against this.

36 Review of Blue Badge Arrangements

The Chair reported that the Council had been approached by Age UK with a request to review arrangements for Blue Badge applications which were now made on line.

The Chair of the Communities Overview Committee welcomed the suggestion that the Committee incorporate this topic as a high priority into its work programme. He endeavoured to make early contact with Age UK and Citizens Advice to establish the issues and help frame the terms of reference for this piece of work. A request was made that both organisations participate in the work of the committee and that contact also be made with an appropriate NHS officer regarding the mechanisms for clinical input in the application.

It was agreed to refer the review of Blue Badge arrangements to the Communities Overview Committee.

37 Environmental Enforcement

The Chair set out a proposal that Cabinet be asked to look into ways of increasing the powers of parking enforcement officers and environmental and street scene teams so that fixed penalties for fly tipping, dog fouling and anti social behaviour could be issued on the spot.

The Head of Business and Consumer Protection and Head of Transport and Environment were present for this item and advised of a number of considerations that would need to be taken into account. These included the implications of redirecting staff from current front line roles and meeting the needs of existing contracts. There would also be legal considerations and back office requirements to take into account along with training needs, the need for a criminal investigation mindset, and DEFRA and Trade Union involvement would be required.

During discussion members referred to the need for education and involvement of communities and current stress on the system due to covid.

The Committee agreed that the suggestion was worthy of closer examination and it was agreed that the Chair should request that Cabinet look into this and report back in six months.

38 Shropshire Plan

Tom Dodds, Organisational Performance Manager, gave a presentation and answered questions on the Shropshire Plan and explained its component parts. The Plan would be both interactive and easily navigable. He reported on a slight delay to engagement and the delivery plan element due to the North Shropshire by-election and impact of the omicron variant on service delivery. Thematic dashboards for each priority would pick out milestone measures.

An engagement period was initially running for four weeks, this was intended to gather views of members and the public on priorities but this time period could be extended if desired but this would mean that the Plan would be presented to Council after its 24 February meeting.

Member Briefings on the Plan would be delivered online and service delivery plans would come to Scrutiny during the Spring.

Members emphasised the need for the PMSC to take as substantial role in monitoring key policies and delivery.

39 Report of the Financial Strategy Task and Finish Group

As an additional meeting of the Committee had been called by two members of the Council requesting further consideration of the Financial Strategy and a report agreed by Cabinet on 5 January 2022 on Shirehall Catering Operations, it was agreed to look at the proposed report of the Group at that meeting.

40 Work Programme

The Scrutiny Officer encouraged members to forward any proposals for the work programme with a clear indication of scope and what it was hoped to achieve.

He reported that the Marches LEP had asked to attend and provide an update at the March meeting.

The draft Programme would be updated and presented to the next meeting.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: