

Crawley Borough Council

Council-owned Neighbourhood Parades Scrutiny Panel

Agenda for the **Council-owned Neighbourhood Parades Scrutiny Panel** which will be held in **Committee Rooms A & B - Town Hall**, on **Wednesday, 13 July 2022 at 7.00 pm**

Nightline Telephone No. 07881 500 227



Chief Executive

Membership:

Councillors

R A Lanzer (Chair), M L Ayling, K Khan, M Mwagale, D M Peck and
T Rana

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The order of business may change at the Chair's discretion

Part A Business (Open to the Public)

	Pages
1. Apologies for Absence	
2. Disclosures of Interest & Whipping Declarations	
In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, councillors are reminded that it is a requirement to declare interests where appropriate.	
Councillors must also declare if they are subject to their party group whip in relation to any items under consideration.	
3. Minutes	5 - 10
To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Council-owned Neighbourhood Parades Scrutiny Panel held on 14 October 2021.	
4. General Updates and Information	
To receive any relevant updates and information from Panel members and officers.	
5. Preparation of Final Report and Recommendations	11 - 34
To decide whether the Panel has had all the information required to complete the review, and if so, to agree on the recommendations to be included in the final report.	
Background papers are attached as follows:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appendix A: scoping framework• Appendix B: consultation responses• Appendix C: ideas for draft recommendations	
Minutes of previous panel meetings can be found here .	
6. Supplemental Agenda	
Any urgent item(s) complying with Section 100(B) of the Local Government Act 1972.	

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Council-owned Neighbourhood Parades Scrutiny Panel (26)
14 October 2021

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Council-owned Neighbourhood Parades Scrutiny Panel

Thursday, 14 October 2021 at 7.00 pm

Councillors Present:

R A Lanzer (Chair)

M L Ayling, T Lunnon, M Mwangale and D M Peck

Also in Attendance:

Councillor Peter Smith Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development

Neil Cooper Director, Graves Jenkins

Officers Present:

Richard Gammie Commercial Asset Manager

Karen Hayes Head of Corporate Finance

Karen Rham Neighbourhood Services Manager

Jess Tamplin Democratic Services Support Officer

Kate Wilson Head of Community Services

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor S Mullins

1. Disclosures of Interest & Whipping Declarations

No disclosures of interest or whipping declarations were made.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Council-owned Neighbourhood Parades Scrutiny Panel held on 26 July 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. General Updates and Information

The Commercial Asset Manager updated Panel members regarding potential witnesses at future meetings of the Panel. It was considered that staff at Milligan Ltd, a retail development company, could be asked to share their views on the Council's neighbourhood shopping parade policy. It was recognised that the company could provide expertise from an independent standpoint which may lead to improvements in

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the policy; Milligan had advised other local authorities on similar matters. Panel members noted that this was cost-dependent.

Actions

- That Milligan Ltd be approached for a quote regarding advice on the Council's management of the shopping parades.
- That the quote be circulated to Panel members and, following this, a decision be made as to whether to invite Milligan Ltd to give advice to the Panel.

4. Witness Sessions

The Panel invited the Council's Neighbourhood Services Manager to speak. At a previous witness session with the Panel in June 2021, the Neighbourhood Services Manager had been requested to provide the Panel with more detailed information about the Neighbourhood Services team's experiences of visiting the shopping parades on a daily basis. The Panel was presented with photographs showing various issues at each of the parades, including (but not limited to) the following:

- Fly tipping. Large items were regularly left next to communal household waste bins, which were not removed (under the terms of their contract with the Council) by refuse collectors. The waste was therefore removed by the Neighbourhood Services team which caused a significantly higher workload and encroached upon the time required to do other essential jobs.
- Overfilled waste bins. Waste was piled high on top of the bins, sometimes blocked footpaths or roads, and was a potential health hazard.
- Broken paving, tree grilles, and lamp posts/poles. These contributed to an unattractive streetscene and made the parades look dated.
- Old street furniture. Some benches were found to be damaged and not fit for purpose. Old public bins had no facility for the disposal of cigarette butts so caused mess. Phone boxes were damaged.
- Unattractive landscaping. Weeds were growing through paving and dead plants had not been removed. Some areas of landscaping had been trodden down by 'desire paths'. There were however areas where thoughtful landscaping of evergreen plants had made for attractive displays with easy upkeep.
- Dirty road signs and faded road markings. These were unsightly and could also be unsafe for road users.
- Leaves, cigarette butts and other detritus collecting in corners, which contributed to a feeling of uncleanliness.
- Outdated advertising posters, graffiti, and chewing gum on public walls and pavements.

It was explained that there was the potential to improve these issues through proactive education of residents, enforcement measures, and the provision of more/improved facilities (e.g. new furniture, bins, planting). To achieve this the Neighbourhood Services team required up to three new members of staff and/or more funding for equipment, facilities, etc. This had been demonstrated recently by the successful results from hiring two temporary staff members – financed by the Government's Covid-19 'Welcome Back' fund – responsible for deep cleaning in the town centre. Panel members noted that any financial costs as a result of the Panel's recommendations were subject to approval by the Cabinet.

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The Neighbourhood Services Manager praised the work of the team and highlighted that officers were often required to undertake tasks at the parades which were not their direct responsibility.

The Panel discussed the above issues. It was recognised that fly tipping was an issue throughout the area but measures were being brought in to tackle the problem, such as West Sussex County Council's 'Let's SCRAP Fly Tipping' joint-working scheme. Crawley Borough Council's Environmental Crime Officer, whose position was fixed-term and Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) funded, also undertook work to prevent fly tipping. The Panel noted that Community Wardens sorted through waste bins to uncover evidence of the identity of those who had dumped waste in public places. The Head of Community Services confirmed that the Council always sought to prosecute, issue fines, or give warnings as a result of fly tipping; recently there had been two successful prosecutions relating to this. Panel members also discussed the extent to which intelligence was shared between the county and district councils, Sussex Police, and other agencies to ensure repeat offenders of fly tipping were issued appropriate penalties.

The Panel considered ways to raise awareness of the issues caused by fly tipping. It was agreed that the photographs shown to the Panel were impactful and that these could be shared with residents as a deterrent and to promote proper waste disposal.

Upon receipt of a query regarding planting and landscaping, the Neighbourhood Services Manager clarified that a temporary team of officers was financed by Covid-19 funds from central government, whose job consisted of, in part, the replenishment of planting in public spaces in the town. The team prioritised the areas which were most in need (assessed by the number of public complaints received) and had not yet worked on the neighbourhood parades as part of this project. It was heard that funding for this team was due to cease in March 2022.

The Panel invited Mr Neil Cooper, a Director of Graves Jenkins – the company used by the Council to manage the letting of its commercial property – to speak. A summary of each of the four key 'trigger points' (i.e. when changes can be made to a tenancy) was given.

1) Rent reviews

Rent reviews allow for consideration of the rent rate and mostly occur every five years of a lease. It was estimated that approximately 80% of leases nationally are designated as 'upward-only' so rates will not decrease upon review.

2) Lease expiry

Leases expire when they end on the agreed date. Lease terms can be renegotiated (e.g. lease length, break clauses, and rent rates). Lease renewals are governed by legislation.

3) Vacated unit

CBC considers the use class of a unit when it becomes vacant, and after appropriate marketing selects a new tenant having regard to proposed use and rent offer. Units are not always given to those offering the highest rent.

4) Sale of lease

A tenant can assign their lease to another business by selling it on – this is facilitated by CBC. Factors such as the state of repair are taken into account during this process.

The Panel noted that some rents currently paid to the Council by parade businesses (mostly those let in the open market) were higher than those proposed by the Council as part of the rent review process. More traditional uses were increasing on the

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parades, there was a high demand for units, and there had been few vacancies or lease sales recently. These factors were all considered positive.

During discussion with Panel members, the following information and clarifications were provided:

- A list was kept of people enquiring about obtaining a parade unit, who were contacted when one became available. The list was also used to assess demand.
- If a tenant's rent became unmanageably high, they could sell their lease or negotiate terms with the Council.
- Rents not based on the 'upward-only' review system could be charged a rent based on the business's turnover. This relied on businesses providing their accounts, which was typically more difficult for smaller businesses.
- An alternative to the typical rent review basis was to base rates on RPI/CPI, however it was questioned whether this was an accurate reflection of rental rates. Such indexed rents could also be set annually rather than five yearly.
- Shorter leases (e.g. 5 years) were possible; providing a shorter-term commitment and avoiding rent reviews. However lease renewals were normally more costly than rent reviews.
- Flats above shop units were generally considered an asset for tenants as it was their choice on how to best use the space, which could be lived in, used for storage, or sub-let at full market rent which could provide extra income. In theory flats could be let separately to shops if there was demand to do so, however this may cause complications between flat tenants and shop tenants.
- Most rent reviews, where not agreed, were subject to independent arbitration.

The Panel thanked Neil Cooper for providing useful information and expertise.

Actions

- That the themes and matters raised as part of the Panel's discussion be carried forward for consideration at its future meetings.
- That the editors of *Crawley Live* magazine be asked to include an article, with photographs, showing the extent of fly tipping and the successful work of Council officers in clearing the waste. The segment was to include a quote from the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development as well as details of the 'Let's SCRAP Fly Tipping' campaign.

5. Evaluation of Scoping Framework

The Panel discussed the scoping framework (appendix A to the agenda) and the extent to which its objectives had been met by the review so far.

It was noted that the majority of the matters listed in the framework had been considered by the Panel. Further information was requested regarding the Council's current financial position and in response the Head of Corporate Finance stated that an all-member seminar regarding the Council's budget was scheduled for Tuesday 19 October, at which councillors were to be provided with relevant updates. It was noted that the initial report to the Scrutiny Panel ([FIN/499](#)) also gave a range of financial information relevant to the Panel's work.

The Panel discussed the benefits of consideration of other local authorities' neighbourhood shopping parade policies and agreed that further comparisons would help to meet the objectives set out in the scoping framework.

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Actions

- That the Commercial Asset Manager contact officers of other 'new town' local authorities requesting the following details: their councils' rent rates and how they are calculated; the type and frequency of rent reviews; and the scope of repairs policies.

6. Date of Next Meeting

Panel members considered proposed dates for future meetings of the Panel. It was agreed that the date of the next meeting was dependent on the availability of the witnesses to be invited, which was not yet confirmed.

Actions

- That Panel members agree the date of the next meeting via email.

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Council-owned Neighbourhood Parades Scrutiny Panel concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 9.04 pm

R A Lanzer (Chair)

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To decide whether the Panel has had all the information required to complete the review, and if so, to agree on the recommendations to be included in the final report.

Background papers are attached as follows:

- Appendix A: scoping framework
- Appendix B: consultation responses
- Appendix C: ideas for draft recommendations

Minutes of previous panel meetings can be found [here](#).

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Scoping Framework

Council-owned Neighbourhood Parades Scrutiny Panel

PART 1: THE REVIEW

Section I - Terms of reference

To examine the various roles of council-owned neighbourhood parades to explore:

- How effectively these are currently being discharged.
- What improvements might be made for the future.

Section II – Reasons for the review

The Council owns 11 neighbourhood parades across Crawley. An important revenue stream is provided by the parades, which are intended to be ‘community assets’ due to the provision of local shopping facilities. The current neighbourhood parade policy (the [Property Strategy](#)) was adopted in May 2004 and aimed for a commercial approach to the Council’s property portfolio. The policy has been in place for 16 years, so there is an opportunity to examine how effective it has been over this substantial time period in meeting its objectives.

The desired outcome is an appraisal of the effectiveness of neighbourhood parade policies in meeting agreed objectives since May 2004 and consideration of possible changes for the future.

Section III - Key objectives of review

The review will involve consideration of the following:

- How successful has the revenue stream from the parades been under the current policy? How important is this revenue stream to council services?
- Are the parades perceived as ‘community assets’ by locals (an objective of the Property Strategy)? If so, how do the parades meet this objective? E.g. how successfully do they provide access to shops without the need to travel? Does the diversity of shops fulfil this?
- What else do residents want from their local parade(s)?
- Consideration of the information provided within report [FIN/499](#) regarding:
 - The current tenant/use mix of the parades and changes of use over time.
 - The number of vacant units.
 - The number (and usage requirements) of parties on the waiting list for a unit.
 - The policy regarding flats over the retail units.
 - The policy regarding the 21 year rule on extensions to the property.
 - The policy for responsibility for maintenance.

And whether these matters meet the objectives of the Local Plan.

- Clarity on the rent review/lease renewal process.
- Analysis of the real increase in rents allowing for inflation (RPI).
- How a potential tenant’s ability to run a business is assessed/supported – the Council offers some signposting to resources but is limited in the ways it can help support tenants to run a business (such as training/guidance).
- How the Coronavirus pandemic has affected retail on the parades.
- The financial position of the Council in the context of the Coronavirus pandemic.

After consideration of the above, what options might there be for change?

Section IV - What will not be included in the scope (and why)?

It is proposed that the review should be kept proportionate, by focusing on the aims, objectives and scope as set out in the suggestion form, in order to target the areas which will add the most value. The scope could be very wide-reaching but should be kept to considerations which are directly relevant to the matter at hand.

Scrutiny should not duplicate any other work currently being undertaken within the Council.

PART 2: EVIDENCE GATHERING AND PLANNING

Section V - Key documents and background information the panel may find useful

1. [Property Strategy May 2004](#)
2. [Report FIN/499 - Council-owned Neighbourhood Parades Introductory Report](#)
3. [Competition Act 1988](#)
4. ["Running of Crawley's neighbourhood parades to be reviewed", Crawley Observer, 10.06.20](#)
5. [Facebook post and public comments – "what would you change about your nearest neighbourhood parade if you could?" Crawley Observer](#)
6. [CBC website – support and advice during the Coronavirus outbreak for business and employers](#)
7. [Gov.uk website – financial support for businesses during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
8. Information and evidence from CBC officers
9. Witness sessions with relevant parties
10. Consultation with public.

Regard should be had for current (and proposed) policy documents and legislation when undertaking the panel's work to ensure compliance with Council policies and priorities.

Any consultation will need to take into account Coronavirus restrictions and the safety of residents and CBC staff, together with resources and time constraints. The CfPS guidance on understanding scrutiny work during the Coronavirus pandemic can be found [here](#). Early discussion with the communications team will be essential.

Section VI – Suggested witnesses to be invited

<u>Organisation/Position</u>	<u>Type of Feedback</u>	<u>Reason for Inviting</u>
<p>CBC</p> <p>Asset Manager</p>	<p>Witness session</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide information on how the current strategy has worked in regard to the revenue stream and how important this revenue is to council services, together with information on how rents are calculated. Gather their views on the Property Strategy and suggestions for any areas for improvement. • NB - discussion may be in exempt session.

Head of Corporate Finance/Chief Accountant	Witness session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To assist the panel in its analysis of the real increase in rents allowing for inflation (RPI) and the revenue stream gathered from the parades. Gather their suggestions for any areas for improvement. NB - discussion may be in exempt session.
Community Services Manager/Officer	Witness session (feedback on Facebook – see V.5 above – is partly focused on crime and disorder issues on the parades)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide the panel with a perspective on the community safety aspects of/nearby the neighbourhood parades.
Cabinet Members	Witness sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To gather views on the current strategy. To provide information on how residents may be affected by the Coronavirus situation and the impact this may have on the parades (and how/to what extent they are meeting the objectives).
External Representative of a similar 'new town' council	Witness session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To give information on neighbourhood parade strategies/policies elsewhere in order to compare to those of CBC.
Letting Agent	Witness session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To update on the Coronavirus situation and give views on how the policy works in practice.
Parade tenants	Witness sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To give views on how the policy works in practice and to recognise and understand any changes tenants would like made.
Sussex Police	Witness session or information provided through CBC Community Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide the panel with a perspective on the community safety aspects of/nearby the neighbourhood parades.

Section VII - Site Visits by Panel Members <i>(dependent on Coronavirus restrictions and safety)</i>		
<u>Location/Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Purpose of Visit</u>
TBC	TBC	TBC

Section VIII - Community Engagement Proposals

Consultation with the public via web survey, publicised via community noticeboards. In-person and paper-based consultation more difficult to ensure Covid safe.

PART 3: ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKLIST

Section IX – The Panel’s Work Programme		
	<u>Date</u>	<u>Details: (e.g. witnesses, objectives etc.)</u>
Panel meeting 1	08/12/20	Background report and scoping framework
Panel meeting 2	02/02/21	Reviews by other LAs; CBC Asset Management & Community Services witness sessions
Panel meeting 3	11/03/21	Details of consultation
Panel meeting 4	23/06/21	Results of consultation; tenant witness sessions
Panel meeting 5	26/07/21	Assessment of the panel’s progress/recommendations so far
Panel meeting 6	14/10/21	CBC Neighbourhood Services & Graves Jenkins witness sessions
Panel meeting 7	13/07/22	Recommendations and final report

Section X - Resources and Responsibilities	
Chair	Cllr Lanzer
Members	Cllrs Ayling, K Khan, Lunnø, S Mullins, Mwangale, Peck, and Rana
Lead Officers	Sue Bader/Richard Gammie (Asset Manager) Karen Hayes (Head of Corporate Finance)
Democratic Services Officer	Jess Tamplin
Head of Service	Head of Corporate Finance

Section XI - Reporting Arrangements	
<u>Committee/body</u>	<u>Date (prov.)</u>
Final report of panel to Overview and Scrutiny Commission	5 September 2022
Final report to Cabinet	7 September 2022
Final report to other committee, Full Council or body (as appropriate)	TBC

Section XII – Approvals		
<u>Details</u>	<u>By whom</u>	<u>Date</u>
Terms of reference/Panel agreed	OSC	28/09/20
Scoping Framework - drafted	Democratic Services	Nov 20
Scoping Framework - first agreed	Panel	08/12/20



COUNCIL-OWNED NEIGHBOURHOOD
PARADES SURVEY
(PARADE TENANT SECTION)

JUNE 2021

Introduction

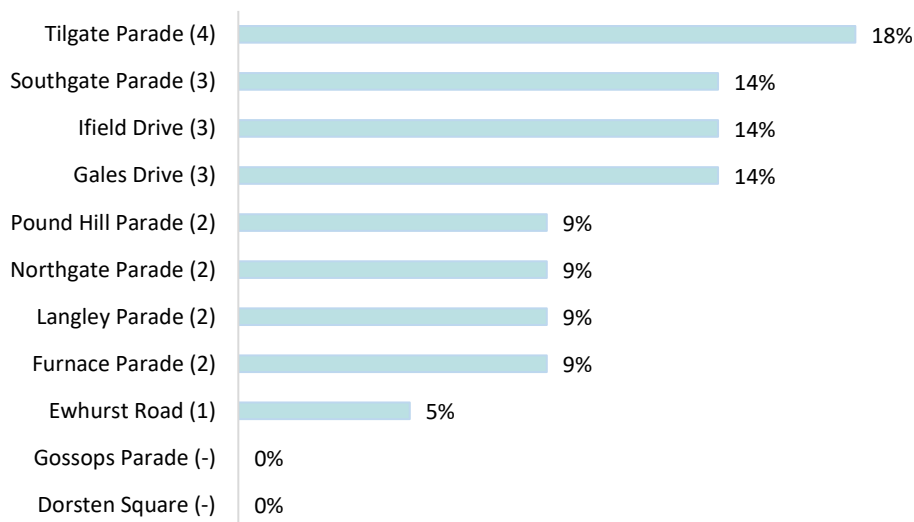
The survey was made available from 13th May until 11th June 2021 with data being gathered using an online survey hosted on the council’s consultation page.

The quantitative and qualitative data for each question is contained under the corresponding question headings, along with the verbatim comments respondents gave within the survey where applicable.

Out of the 364 overall responses to the survey, 23 were from respondents stating that they were a parade tenant, equivalent to 6.3% of responses. Neighbourhood parade tenants were asked some additional questions to the public survey, the results of which are contained in the survey results section below.

Survey results

1. On which Crawley neighbourhood parade is your premises situated?



2. How long have you been a tenant of a Council-owned parade unit?

The table below breaks down, by location, the average number of years that respondents stated they have been a tenant of a parade unit. The combined average tenancy length across all locations is 16.38 years.

Neighbourhood parade	No. of years as tenant of a Council-owned parade unit (average)
Tilgate Parade	11
Gales Drive	14
Ifield Drive	11

Southgate Parade	25
Furnace Parade	21
Langley Parade	9
Northgate Parade	14
Pound Hill Parade	24
Ewhurst Road	20
Dorsten Square	-
Gossops Parade	-

3. Did you have experience of owning your own business before taking on a parade unit?

Did you have experience of owning your own business before taking on a parade unit?	
Yes	No
39%	61%

The 39% of respondents who indicated that they had previous experience owning their own business, had an average of 16.1 years of experience.

Please briefly outline your previous experience owning your own business

9 comments

- I was operation manager for RHM in charge of more than 20 units .
- Rented a barbers section in another Crawley Parade shop at Gossops Green for 3 years
- I was running the same business without owning the lease
- Restaurant in Ealing
- Have owned multiple business prior to tilgate . In West Croydon and Surbiton area . In total 5 businesses.
- Owned newsagent shop previously.
- I have been in the pet trade for 25 years before taking no 7 Tilgate parade
- I have been in my business field for many years, working in the industry and then owning my own. Business used to be very fulfilling, however now it feels like we are paying money just to survive.
- Owner of W king motors behind fouled shops

4. Before taking on a parade unit, were you given any business support advice by the Council?

Before taking on a parade unit, were you given any business support advice by the Council?	
Yes	No
5%	96%

Please briefly describe the business support advice were you given

1 comment

- About the health and safety of food.

5. Are there any elements of your approach to running your business (e.g. accounting), that would benefit from extra guidance or information?

13 comments

- Yes. I had attended several management courses.
- I had a clear plan for the shop when i took it on and consulted with my Accountant fully and showed and discussed my plan with my Bank Manager to gain funds to pay the premium required to purchase and reassign the lease. This should be done by all incoming tenants.
- Some help with retail stats and help market the parade and business with shop local theme will help us getting more consumers.
- No
- Promote the parade business
- No I have been running my own business for 45 years
- Any tax relief opportunities.
- Yes definitely marketing skills / Council supporting the businesses like Horsham council through their dedicated economic development unit working with small businesses and supporting them through council run events /trade fairs and festivals such as the "Big Nibble" event
- No
- Yes , I think making sure that the tenant is aware of other financial implications regarding repairs and other insurance payments and accounting .
- No
- Not yet
- Marketing - I have for many years asked for help from the council to have access to my target market, such as OAPs that live alone that would benefit from our service.

6. What is your experience of the operation of Council rent reviews?

What is your experience of the operation of Council rent reviews?		
Positive	Neutral	Negative
13%	22%	65%

Please provide any further comments in relation to your answer

18 comments

Positive

- No any at the moment.

Neutral

- Yet to experience a rent review
- I guess the rents are to high as we have got two units closed one the Chinese which has been closed for ages.

Negative

- Exorbitant rent&we get full repairing lease as wel.
- Surprised rent reviews is a negotiation and expected it to be standardised. Expected the process to be more transparent.
- Over the years i have negotiated many times with different people from the council or their appointed representatives and have found a common approach from all of them of a THIS IS WHAT WE WANT, TAKE IT OR LEAVE approach, and then use a market rent from rents attained from their other properties who may not have paid a premium, and just tendered a rent for the unit, if they have not paid a premium then they can offer a higher rent, this still does not mean they will be successful as a business but their bid effects all of us tenants when our review comes up. I have also found that the Council have constantly been moving the goal posts over how they break down the rent between the shop and the flat, when i took out my last new lease i had the option of giving the flat back to the council, at the time there was a nominal fee for the flat because of the introduction of VAT on the shop, so i kept the unit together, but when it came to the next review suddenly the rent for the flat doubled with out any warning. on the next review it went up again to be the same as a three bedroom council rent. this was used for the next review but on my new lease renewal in 2018 yet another new formula was used with a commercial rent used and a discount of 35% given off the amount. this was not used on the previous review but the council negotiator seemed to think it had and produced a formula for me to show how it was worked out the last time but i was never shown this formula at the review, he also showed my neighbor a different formula to arrive at his rent for the flat on her previous review. The formula used now gives the Council a guaranteed high income from the flats but does not take into account the cost to the lease holder of updating the property from the 1950s state it was in when i took it on or the fact that the lease holder has to do all repairs and maintenance to the property. We also take all the risks of a rogue tenant, which can cost thousands of pounds to get evicted and repair damage done, this is not taken into account in the new formula used by the Council. To be honest the Flat can be a lot of risk for what is now a very small return.
- This should be calculated by retail price indexed rent reviews, which is the norm all over the country and will not cause any issues on the way forward
- Council only wants to increase the rent no matter what and this not a realistic approach. Its like the council is holding us as tenants for ransom and they are very quick to say if

you don't agree with us leave the shop(leaving shop means leaving our livelihoods)so thats an extortion in other way.

- Not thinking how one can save their business after 5-10 years if they keep on putting the rent up by 30-40% a year, not thinking about the future of the parade
- The council fail to understand the realities of the financial climate. They accept lower rent from the bakery on the parade, a year later offer us a substantial higher amount. Mr [REDACTED] has his selection of favourite business on the parade and seems to harass the others. Another example , coral betting shop. The rear of their unit is a mess, broken fence,broken gates . [REDACTED] will harass us threatening us to fix these issues . Coral store has not been touched since I have been on the parade . They have let the Co op return the upstairs property to the council but will not let the other businesses do the same . This leaves us all on a unfair disadvantages. The parade is riddled with drugs and crime. Mr [REDACTED] has not once come down to try fix the issue . The council just hide and do not actively come and talk to the businesses to make it a better atmosphere
- Rent increase is terribly high.
- Should consider the type of business,ie. one band man or big organisations co op. Domino's and openings hours.
- I have had a great deal of experience dealing with landlords in the past but never dealt with such a difficult and intransigent group of people over this rental negotiation. In answer to the next question a questionnaire would be a wast of time as they don't listen to anything the tenants say.
- There is no negotiation. Inly the council's option is presented. Any counter offers are not considered.
- The Council is running a monopoly whereby they are only comparing the rent with other neighbourhoods which are also run by themselves . The private sector rents have not gone up for the last 15years in Crawley yet the council is putting it up by 20%. How is this sustainable ???
- I believe the rent to be too high for the volume of customers that we get. People in Crawley have had their household incomes badly affected, which causes them to spend less. As a result, this has impacted income massively and to have such high overheads is worrying, to say the least.
- The Council makes a habit of demanding unreasonable increases at evrey review
- With covid not helpful

7. What would be your view of receiving a regular questionnaire regarding the Council's running of the neighbourhood parades?

82% of respondents indicated that they supported receiving a regular questionnaire regarding the Council's running of the neighbourhood parades. Respondents opposed to the proposal totalled 5%, with the remaining 14% of respondents neither in support nor in opposition.

Preferred regular questionnaire frequency				
Every month	Every three months	Every six months	Every year	Every two years
11%	6%	22%	56%	6%

8. What is your view of the balance between the Council’s maintenance responsibilities and your own?

What is your view of the balance between the Council’s maintenance responsibilities and your own?		
Well-balanced	Neutral	Not well-balanced
-	26%	74%

Please briefly describe the reasons for your answer, along with any further suggestions

19 Comments

- Council asking for maximum money & we are responsible for everything. Security of the parade none existing. Too many breaking in the parades. Unsociable behaviour is too high.
- The current lease is full maintenance and repair including structural liabilities. The council have no liability what so ever we even pay council insurance which covers nothing.
- On Southgate Parade we have had one make over in 60 years, it may have cost 300k at the time but this is not much compared to the amount of rent received over that 60 years period. we have flat roof area's that have not been replaced for over 30 years and are starting to leak. We are made to keep the Shops and Flats up to a standard, but the Council are slow to reinvest in their own properties which the majority are now well over 60 years old. we have had some work done over the last couple of years to the guttering which was very welcome.
- The Council made the tenants take out building insurance with them, which is more expensive and any issues are not passed to the insurance company to resolve, yet the surveyor at CBC will come and attend to give a recommendation, surely if we are paying an insurance firm, they should send a surveyor.
- Every rent review council gives us the list of dilapidations to sort out.(within the set time). Whereas for them to keep the building’s outside and inside they only do when there is an issue not to maintain.
- Council don’t maintain the properly it’s very dirty I run a restaurant and from where my customer sitting you can see the pillars they haven’t been painted for a good 5-10 years they got chewing gum on the pavement is very dirty always there is rubbish everywhere on parade
- The parade is filthy, full of drug dealers and crime . The parade is not well illuminated in the evenings and does not feel safe . The council have neglected this parade and put it on the businesses to look after the parade . Again Mr [REDACTED] is not approachable and he himself has said he will try try make it as difficult as possible for us here until we sign new rent contract .
- They should do repairs in and out but they never do. E.g. Toilet repairs/Plumbing roof repair. They took no responsibility for this.

- Full maintenance lease as well as hi insurance is very unfair
- Wouldn't it be a good idea if they had some parade meetings to discover if there is some mutual agreement that could be reached.
- Most of the Both parties take care of their maintenance responsibilities.
- The council was doing the external maintenance previously but now its has been put to the tenant . I think if the council takes the maintenance of the external work then the parades would look much cleaner as some tenants are not doing the external work as they should.
- Far too much falls on the tenants shoulders, not proportionate to the amount of rent charged. In addition there seems to be some confusion amongst tenants regarding standards of upkeep in particular with the flats e.g. some flats have broken and boarded up windows and rubbish everywhere, others are in a good state of repair.
- I have completely refurbished the flat above as it was inhabitable for rental . I also have refurbished the salon .
- Not any at the moment.
- It feels as if we are paying rent, doing all the maintenance, and not getting any support from to council in return. Usually, the landlord should be in charge of maintenance and repairs, however, we are paying a high rent value for nothing in return, we're paying rent to have the right to do business.
- The council seem to expect all maintenance to be carried out by the tenant
- Amount of up keep
- We pay more out

9. Does your parade unit include a flat or maisonette?

A total of 77% indicated that their unit included a flat or maisonette. These respondents were then asked a supplementary question on how the included flat or maisonette was being utilised.

Flat or maisonette is currently...		
Occupied	Rented out	Used for business purposes
47%	41%	12%

10. Would you be interested in attending a meeting of the Council-owned Neighbourhood Parades Scrutiny Panel?

Would you be interested in attending a meeting of the Council-owned Neighbourhood Parades Scrutiny Panel?	
Yes	No
61%	39%



COUNCIL-OWNED NEIGHBOURHOOD
PARADES CONSULTATION
(PUBLIC SURVEY RESPONSES)

JUNE 2021

Introduction

The survey was made available from 13th May until 11th June 2021 with data being gathered using an online survey hosted on the council’s consultation page.

The quantitative and qualitative data for each question is contained under the corresponding question headings, along with themed comments tables where qualitative responses were required.

A total of 364 responses were received, with qualitative responses having been analysed and grouped into themes. The percentage of mentions indicates the amount of comments that appear within a particular theme, however qualitative questions were not mandatory and therefore the number of responses to each question may vary. Due to the large number of different themes, only those that are mentioned more than once are displayed within each table for presentation purposes.

Survey results

1. How safe do you feel on the neighbourhood parades – in both the daytime and in the evening?

Time period	Feel safe	Feel unsafe	Neutral
Daytime	79%	5%	17%
Evening	21%	48%	31%

1.1. Which factors in particular cause you to feel unsafe on the neighbourhood parades?

158 comments

Which factors in particular cause you to feel unsafe on the neighbourhood parades?	
Groups loitering	60%
Street drinking and drunken behaviour	40%
Drug dealing and drug abuse	23%
General anti-social behaviour	21%
Poor lighting	15%
Rough sleeping and begging	11%
Lack of visible police presence	8%
Lack if CCTV	4%
Harassment by strangers	3%
Reports of crime	2%

2. Have you experienced any anti-social behaviour at the neighbourhood parades in the last 12 months?

Have you experienced any anti-social behaviour at the neighbourhood parades in the last 12 months?	
Yes	50%
No	50%

2.1. If no (to Q2), who would you most likely contact if you did experience any anti-social behaviour taking place at the neighbourhood parades?

Who would you most likely contact if you did experience any anti-social behaviour taking place at the neighbourhood parades?	
Police	64%
I wouldn't report it or would be very unlikely to report it	28%
Community Warden	19%
Council	14%
Friend or family member	13%
Other	1%

Answered: 'Other'

- If a shop was open I'd contact them as hopefully they know who we should contact and how.

2.1(a). What would be the reason why you wouldn't/ would be very unlikely to report it?

The 34 respondents who indicated that they wouldn't/ would be unlikely to report anti-social behaviour, were then asked to submit the reasons to why this was the case.

What would be the reason why you wouldn't/ would be very unlikely to report it?	
Don't think anything would be done about it	54%
Would think it wasn't important enough	22%
Wouldn't be sure how to report it	20%
Other	4%

Answered: 'Other'

- Worried about recrimination
- Having previously worked with the police I feel that they lack resources to deal with low level behaviour until it escalates.

2.2. If yes (to Q2), did you report it or tell anyone about it?

Did you report it or tell anyone about it?	
Yes	22%
No	79%

2.2(a). If yes, who did you tell or report it to?

Who did you tell or report it to?	
Police	80%
Council	28%
Community Warden	23%
Friend or family member	13%
Other	5%

Answered: 'Other'

- Tilgate residents
- Shop keeper

2.2(b). If no, what was the reason why (you didn't report it)?

What was the reason why (you didn't report it)?	
Didn't think anything would be done about it	80%
Wasn't sure how to report it	28%
Thought it wasn't important enough	23%
Other	5%

Answered: 'Other'

- Police not interested
- Sorted it myself
- No one cares! Police don't care, so what is the point?
- another person reported
- Hard to distinguish between anti-social behaviour and what has become acceptable.
- A shop assistant advised the person concerned is known to the PCSOs and they are addressing the problem. I have not seen the person concerned again
- Police wouldn't bother turning up, not interested
- Kids sitting on benches around shops may not be deemed anti-social behaviour unless specifically causing issues. However from experience at another council site, when it is reported it took police over 2 hours to respond. By which time the group had dispersed.
- I have notified the police numerous times . This resulted in my windows being smashed . Mp Henry Smith has tried to help. When we notified [REDACTED] he neglected the issue . We offered for him to come one evening on a Friday night to see for himself which he refused
- The backlash
- Both Crawley police and council are useless
- Someone else had already highlighted the problem.

3. What is your view of the general tidiness of the neighbourhood parades?

What is your view of the general tidiness of the neighbourhood parades?	
Tidy	49%
Untidy	18%
Neither tidy nor untidy	33%

4. Should the council seek to influence the make-up of the neighbourhood parades in the interests of the environment and healthy eating?

Should the council seek to influence the make-up of the neighbourhood parades in the interests of the environment and healthy eating?	
Yes	65%
No	36%

4.1. Please briefly describe the reasons for your answer (to Q4)

Answered: 'Yes'

98 comments

Theme	Mentions (%)
There needs to be a better mix of businesses and shops on the parades	47%
Initiatives to promote/encourage healthy eating should be pursued	31%
Initiatives protecting/helping the environment should be pursued	16%
Parades have too many junk/fast food outlets	13%
Parades should be better maintained and to higher standard	10%
Parade shops should serve the requirements of their local residents	7%
Too many betting shops	7%
Encourage/support local independent retailers and businesses	5%
Consult and engage with the local community and residents	3%
Improve public safety and security measures	3%
Affordable/lower rents for local independent businesses and retailers	3%
Install more general waste and recycling bins on parades	2%

Council has a social responsibility for encouraging healthy eating and protecting the environment	2%
Focus on reducing anti-social behaviour on the parades	2%

Answered: 'No'

61 comments

Theme	Mentions (%)
Council shouldn't get involved and people should be given freedom of choice	48%
Focus on creating a balance/variety of retail options on parades	20%
Make-up of parades should be based upon user demand	16%
Council should focus on maximising commercial income	10%
Current make-up of neighbourhood parades is suitable	10%
Influence only in regard to the environment	7%
Make-up should be driven by needs of the community	7%
Independent businesses should be supported	5%

5. As a percentage, how much do you think that income from neighbourhood parade rents contributes each year to the total cost of running Crawley Borough Council services?

On average, respondents thought that income from neighbourhood parade rents contributes 19.3% to the total cost of running Crawley Borough Council services each year.

As a percentage, how much do you think that income from neighbourhood parade rents contributes each year to the total cost of running Crawley Borough Council services?	
0-20%	66.2%
21-40%	14.2%
41-60%	13.7%
61-80%	2.2%
81-100%	<1%
Unsure	3.5%

6. How have your shopping habits changed since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic? Do you use the neighbourhood parades...

Do you use the neighbourhood parades...	
More than before the pandemic	46%
About the same	32%
Less than before the pandemic	21%
Other	1%

Answered: 'Other'

- Did not live here before pandemic
- Do not use the parades
- Do not use

Please provide any further details or comments (for answer to Q6)

136 comments

Answered: 'More than before the pandemic'

70 comments

Theme	Mentions (%)
Have been using local shops more generally	46%
Feels safer with variety of measures in place to prevent spread of Covid-19	19%
More convenient	7%
Using parades to buy essentials rather than going to supermarket	7%
Less travelling involved by car, public transport etc.	6%
Not wanting to go to larger supermarkets	6%
Increased use of Co-op supermarket	3%

Answered: 'Less than before the pandemic'

41 comments

Theme	Mentions (%)
Factors due to the pandemic (e.g. shielding, limiting interactions etc.)	46%
Shopped more via internet	27%
Brought shopping by friends and/or family	5%
Poor variety of shops on neighbourhood parades	5%
Closed down shops	5%

Anti-social behaviour	5%
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Answered: 'About the same'

22 comments

Theme	Mentions (%)
No change in shopping habits at neighbourhood parades	27%
Have always shopped locally	18%
Use parades to buy bits and pieces/ top-up items	14%
Limited variety of shops on neighbourhood parades	14%
Post office	9%

7. What type of businesses would you like to see more/fewer of at the neighbourhood parades?

276 comments

Answered: 'More'

What type of businesses would you like to see <u>more</u> of at the neighbourhood parades	
Greengrocers	31%
Butchers	27%
Bakeries	18%
Cafés	12%
Independent retailers	11%
Hardware/ Homeware store	11%
Greater variety of businesses	8%
Post office	8%
Mini supermarket	6%
Greater variety of takeaway restaurants	3%
Pharmacy/ Chemist	3%
Newsagents	3%
Florists	2%
Haberdashery and crafts	2%
Pet shops	1%
Community Hub	1%
Barber shops	1%
Charity shops	1%
Refill stores	1%
Family/ Child friendly stores	1%
Health and wellbeing stores	1%
Bookshops	1%

Answered: 'Fewer'

What type of businesses would you like to see fewer of at the neighbourhood parades	
Takeaway restaurants	25%
Betting shops	11%
Off-licences	5%
Newsagents	3%
Beauty salons and nail bars	3%
Estate agents	2%
Pubs	1%
Barber shops	1%
Massage parlours	1%
Recruitment agencies	1%
Tattoo shops	1%
Coffee shops	1%

8. What ideas or suggestions do you have for the Council to improve the management of the neighbourhood parades?

205 comments

What ideas or suggestions do you have for the Council to improve the management of the neighbourhood parades?	
Better public safety and security measures (e.g. CCTV, better lighting, patrols)	33%
Affordable/ lower rents for local retailers	18%
Have a balance and varied selection of retailers	9%
Regeneration investment	8%
Increase maintenance and cleaning	8%
Communication and engagement with residents and tenants	7%
None/ no comment	2%
Improve parking access	2%
Support small businesses and independent retailers	2%
Allow tenants greater input	1%
Involve local community	1%
Dedicated parades manager	1%

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Council-owned Neighbourhood Parade Scrutiny Panel: Draft Recommendation Ideas

1. Provide advice before and throughout a tenancy, in collaboration with the Council's Economic Development team
2. Send regular questionnaires to tenants
3. Make the language used in the lease documents clearer and simpler to assist all parties in awareness of their maintenance duties
4. Seek to influence the relevant authorities on the implementation of a zero-tolerance policy on alcohol consumption at the parades
5. Seek to influence a review of the CCTV coverage and assess any blind spots

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