

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Monday, 8 June 2020 at 7.18 pm

Councillors Present:

T Rana (Chair)

T G Belben (Vice-Chair)

M L Ayling, R G Burgess, R D Burrett, R S Fiveash, J Hart, R A Lanzer, A Pendlington and K Sudan

Also in Attendance:

Councillor P K Lamb and P C Smith

Officers Present:

Sue Bader	Asset Manager
Natalie Brahma-Pearl	Chief Executive
Heather Girling	Democratic Services Officer
Karen Hayes	Head of Corporate Finance
Chris Pedlow	Democratic Services Manager

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor T McAleney

1. Disclosures of Interest and Whipping Declarations

No disclosures or whipping of interests were made.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on 9 March 2020 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. Public Question Time

No questions from the public were received.

4. **Appointments and Establishment of Scrutiny Panels (Continuation of Membership)**

RESOLVED

That the Commission noted and approved the continuation of following memberships and appointments:

Climate Change Scrutiny Panel

Councillors R S Fiveash, J Hart, K L Jaggard, T Lunnon and A Pendlington, with Councillor K L Jaggard as Chair.

West Sussex Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee (HASC)

Councillor McAleney

West Sussex Joint Scrutiny Steering Group (JSSG)

Councillor Rana

5. **Council-owned Neighbourhood Parades - Introductory Report**

Following the submission of a [Scrutiny Suggestion Form](#) by Councillor Lanzer, the report updated Councillors on the number, nature and examination of the various roles of council-owned neighbourhood parades and explored how effectively these were currently being discharged, together with what improvements might be made for the future.

The current neighbourhood parade policy ([Property Strategy](#)) was adopted in May 2004 when it was decided to adopt a more commercial approach. There was an opportunity to examine its effectiveness over a considerable period of time and the influence that it has had on meeting the range of objectives associated with the neighbourhood parades.

The first Overview and Scrutiny Commission (OSC) meeting was identified as the meeting to receive a detailed report ([FIN/499](#)) outlining the requirements from the scrutiny suggestion and to reconfirm whether there was value and a further need for the Scrutiny Panel.

During the discussion with the Head of Corporate Finance and Asset Manager, Members thanked the officers for a detailed and interesting report, which covered the areas addressed within the scrutiny suggestion form's aim, objective and scope. During the discussion the following comments were made which may be beneficial for a Panel to address further should one be established:

- It was noted that the Council had an important role in the parades to support community assets.
- There was a good range of shops within the parades and this needed to be maintained.
- The increased population and lifestyle choices have an impact on the change of use, such as there were more food takeaways and beauty therapists on the parades than had been previously.

- It was acknowledged there were challenges, both in the past and particularly now with Covid19. It would be interesting to establish whether patterns of use had changed during the pandemic and whether this was pattern was likely to remain. It was remarked that during this time more people had been shopping locally and the role these local shops play needed to remain, particularly given the impact on the carbon footprint.
- Consultation would be important should a Panel proceed although it was noted this would be difficult given the current situation. It would be valuable to find out what residents want from the parades and also include letting agents and some tenants.
- It was acknowledged that a landlord can, acting reasonably, decline to agree that a lease be assigned (sold on) to an assignee. However the basic principle was that the assignee must put the Council as landlord in no worse position than the Council would be with the existing tenant.
- The regeneration works had resulted in much improvement to the parades and the cost had been borne by the Council.
- It was queried whether miscellaneous units should be included into appendix A and whether this could be accommodated by a Panel if established when looking at any rent analysis.
- It was noted that some retail units had flats over, where the Council required that the flat was taken on a commercial lease with the shop. There were two parades where all the flats above the shops were Crawley Homes units.
- Further clarification was sought regarding the different retail uses within the Local Plan, together with those units on specific parades listed in the appendices.
- In terms of vacant units, it was important to find a balance between use and rent. It was important that the use needed to compliment the others on the parades.
- Should a Panel be established the aim, objective and scope to examine the Property Strategy in further detail may produce newer and improved ways for the policy to operate.

Following a lengthy and detailed discussion, the Commission considered the value and requirement for the Scrutiny Panel given the detailed report before them. It was proposed by Councillor Rana and seconded by Councillor T Belben to reconfirm the establishment of the Council-owned Neighbourhood Parades Scrutiny Panel.

Re-Establishment of Scrutiny Panel

The Chair invited the Democratic Services Manager to commence the recorded voting process in accordance with the Council's Virtual Committee Procedure Rules. The names of the Councillors voting for and against recommendation 2.1a were recorded as set out below:

Voting in Favour: Councillors: Ayling, T G Belben, R G Burgess, Burrett, Fiveash, Hart, Lanzer, Pendlington, Rana, Sudan (10)

Voting Against: Councillors: None (0)

Abstentions: Councillors: None (0)

The recommendation was declared as carried – votes in favour 10, votes against 0, with 0 abstention.

RESOLVED

That the Commission reconfirmed the establishment of the Council-owned Neighbourhood Parades Scrutiny Panel.

Membership of Scrutiny Panel

Nominations had been received for the Council-owned Neighbourhood Parades Scrutiny Panel.

It was moved by Councillor Rana, seconded by Councillor T Belben that the Scrutiny Panel be 3:2 split with the following members: Councillors M L Ayling, R S Fiveash, F Guidera, R A Lanzer and T Lunnon, with Councillor Lanzer as Chair and that the Commission's comments would be collated for the first meeting of the Scrutiny Panel which would agree the Scoping Framework.

Following this Councillor Ayling, seconded by Councillor Rana, proposed the appointment of Councillor Ayling as Chair.

The Chair invited the Democratic Services Manager to commence the recorded voting process in accordance with the Council's Virtual Committee Procedure Rules. The names of the Councillors voting for and against recommendation 2.1b were recorded as set out below:

Voting in Favour: Councillors: Ayling, T G Belben, R G Burgess, Burrett, Fiveash, Hart, Lanzer, Pendlington, Rana, Sudan (10)

Voting Against: Councillors: None (0)

Abstentions: Councillors: None (0)

The recommendation was declared as carried – votes in favour 10, votes against 0, with 0 abstention.

RESOLVED

That the Commission confirmed the establishment of the Council-owned Neighbourhood Parades Scrutiny Panel based on a 3:2 membership of Councillors M L Ayling, R S Fiveash, F Guidera, R A Lanzer and T Lunnon.

Chair of Scrutiny Panel

The Chair invited the Democratic Services Manager to commence the recorded voting process in accordance with the Council's Virtual Committee Procedure Rules. The names of the Councillors voting for and against recommendation 2.1c were recorded as set out below:

Voting in Favour of Councillor Ayling: Councillors: Ayling, Fiveash, Hart, Rana, Sudan (5)

Voting in Favour of Councillor Lanzer: Councillors: T G Belben, R G Burgess, Burrett, Lanzer, Pendlington (5)

Abstentions: Councillors: None (0)

As a result the Chair had to use their casting vote and it was,

RESOLVED

Councillor Ayling was appointed as Chair of the Council-owned Neighbourhood Parades Scrutiny Panel.

6. Scrutiny Workshop

The Scrutiny Workshop was provisionally proposed for Wednesday 17 June 2020. However with scrutiny panels already in place and given the current situation it was agreed to cancel the workshop.

7. Forward Plan - and Provisional List of Reports for the Commission's following Meetings

The Commission confirmed the following reports:

22 June 2020

- Treasury Management Outturn 2019 – 2020
- Financial Outturn 2019-2020 (Quarter 4)
- Forward Programme of Key Procurements
- Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan
- EV Charging and Infrastructure Network

(Should OSC Members wish to refer any future items, please email [democratic.services@Crawley.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@ Crawley.gov.uk))

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.28 pm

T Rana (Chair)