

Cabinet
Wednesday 8 September 2021

Comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Commission
at its meeting on Monday 6 September 2021
OSC/296

1. Cabinet Agenda Item 7 - Petition – Keep your dog on a lead in Tilgate Park

Comments and Recommendations

The Commission considered joint report [HCS/30](#) of the Head of Community Services and Petitions Officer.

During the discussion with the Cabinet Member for Wellbeing, the Head of Community Services and Neighbourhood Services Manager, Councillors made the following comments:

- It was acknowledged that the petition referred to Tilgate Park only, however it was hoped Tilgate Park could be a trial for other parks as it was not a problem confined just to one particular area within the town, as the recent dog on dog attacks in Worth Park (which unfortunately resulted in a death of a dog) and that along Worth Way were also mentioned.
- It was felt it was the responsibility of dog owners to keep their dog on a lead and to ensure it was kept under control. Acknowledgement that dogs react differently in various environments and being on a lead would be one option to assist this.
- Dogs were not allowed in the walled garden, nature centre or children's play area within Tilgate Park. The walled garden and nature centre were routinely staffed making this easier to manage and in general it was felt that the public largely complied with and respected the need to keep dogs out of the play area.
- Disappointment was expressed that the current signage within Tilgate Park had not been successful and the vandalism of signs unacceptable.
- There was acknowledgement that the enforcement options detailed in the report included by-laws, PSPOs and CPNs when officers and the police would have to actually witness the infringement and obtain sufficient evidence. These enforcement options differed to the current Community Warden patrols, which provided a visible presence challenging and encouraging owners of dogs off leads. It was noted that the park covered a huge area and it was felt by some that patrols should take place around the entire park, not just the lake.
- Recognition that as part of a communication plan there could be opportunities to focus on more than one issue. Community Wardens have a variety of work and respond geographically to multiple ASB issues including Tilgate Park. There was a good communications plan for Tilgate Park but this could be strengthened with the dogs on leads issue and it was hoped to work with a 'Friends of' group to develop the message.
- An update was provided on the 'Hound Ground' in that further work was ongoing but it was anticipated it would reopen in the future.
- It was felt the number of attacks was under reported and the public should be encouraged to report incidents.
- Recognition that the actions needed to be robust and the penalty of keeping a dog on a lead paled into insignificance when compared to a dog attack and injury inflicted. The majority of Commission members voiced a preference for option 2 within the report, expressing support for the Community Warden Patrol enforcement around the park. It was thought that option 3, may be heavily resource intensive without resulting in behavioural change and minimum reward in comparison. It was hoped that option 2 may in time be rolled out to other parks. Should the Cabinet support option 2, it was suggested that a review takes place in 6-9 months' time following the implementation to assess its operation.

RESOLVED

That the Commission notes the petition, background report and requests that the views expressed during the debate, are fed back to the Cabinet through the Commission's Comment sheet.

2. Cabinet Agenda Item 8 – 2021/2022 Budget Monitoring – Quarter 1

Comments and Recommendations

The Commission considered report [FIN/531](#) of the Head of Corporate Finance.

During the discussion with the Leader of the Council and Chief Accountant, the following comments were made:

- Recognition that the budget was overspent for this quarter. The majority of the reasons were still Covid related (for example people not signing up to use services following the easing of restrictions, number of planning applications received). The situation would be monitored over the next few months and continued to be reported in future monitoring reports.
- Confirmation was provided that Everyone Active had developed additional advertising campaigns to promote K2 Crawley. There may be additional ways (secondary spend) to encourage attendance at venues.
- There was a query surrounding attendance analysis at K2 Crawley. It was felt that once there was a level of normality, and if then, usage levels had not returned to pre-pandemic levels then further analysis may be required. However currently there was too much uncertainty surrounding attendance levels.
- Acknowledgement that whilst individuals' household income had been affected, leisure facilities would continue to be impacted. There was recognition that Covid had resulted in behavioural change and until there was overriding confidence that Covid would not be a concern, then leisure provision would remain a challenging area but it was hopefully not a long term issue. There was also an impact on other services throughout the town as a result of Coronavirus.
- Recognition that the council gave advice to businesses during and post pandemic as well as working in partnership with the business community and MRBD. It was also hoped that there would be further green development in the future.
- Acknowledgement that the review of essential car users' savings anticipated figure was unlikely to be realised but was based on what would be reasonable.

RESOLVED

That the Commission notes the report and requests that the views expressed during the debate, are fed back to the Cabinet through the Commission's Comment sheet.

3. Cabinet Agenda Item 12 – Property Acquisition to Increase the Council's Portfolio of Temporary Accommodation

(Exempt Paragraph 3)

Information relating to financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information)

Comments and Recommendations

The Commission considered report SHAP/83 of the Head of Strategic Housing Services.

During the discussion with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Housing Options Manager, Councillors made the following comments:

- Recognition that the property would assist in the urgent need to increase the portfolio of temporary accommodation owned and managed by the Council to meet the increased demand and ease the reliance on expensive nightly paid accommodation, including out of borough placement.
- Acknowledgement that the detached property would provide an additional 6 units of temporary accommodation. It would be flexible to meet the demands of the service.
- Consultation would take place as part of the planning process.
- General support for the report.

RESOLVED

That the Commission notes the report and requests that the views expressed during the debate, are fed back to the Cabinet through the Commission's Comment sheet.

Councillor K Khan
Vice Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Commission
6 September 2021