

Cabinet Wednesday 6 July 2022

Comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Commission at its meeting on Monday 4 July 2022 OSC/302

1. Cabinet Agenda Item 7 – Public Spaces Protection Order - Keep your dog on a lead in Tilgate Park

Comments and Recommendations

The Commission considered report [HCS/41](#) and [HCS/41a](#) of the Head of Community Services. During the discussion with the Cabinet Member for Wellbeing, the Community Services Manager and Community Safety Officer, the following comments were made:

- It was noted that the proposal and potential change was for a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) to be considered to prohibit dog related anti-social behaviour within specific areas of Tilgate Park: the main lake, Peace Garden, lawn area and golf course. It was acknowledged that the topic was sensitive and divisive. Yet it was important to find a balanced, fair and reasonable approach to this emotive subject.
- There was recognition that the many dog owners who visit Tilgate Park were responsible; keeping their dog under control and exercise it in a manner that does not cause distress to other park users. It was important not to alienate responsible dog owners but to manage anti-social behaviour.
- Support was offered for the Hound Ground, together with the training facility/circuit area to be provided which would offer areas for dogs 'off lead'. However queries were raised regarding costs and operation. It was also noted that dogs needed to remain healthy and be exercised.
- Queries were raised with regards to the perimeter footpaths and clarification was provided with reference to the PSPO areas. In addition, any preservation of woodland and paths would be undertaken as necessary. Comments were raised concerning the woodland area from both Furnace Green and Maidenbower immediately into the PSPO area.
- Acknowledgement that at the expiration of the 3 years, the process would be reviewed to determine whether the threshold to sustain if a PSPO was still being met and repeated if deemed necessary. It was confirmed that reviews could take place within the 3-year period if amendments to the PSPO were required.
- Confirmation was provided on the consultees and responses received. There was an acknowledgement that there was likely to be under-reporting of incidents and the true scale of the issue was not necessarily reflected in formal complaints and reports and that whilst the majority of formally reported and anecdotal incidents were largely focused around the lake and lawn areas, there was evidence of the issue affecting other areas of the park, particularly where wildlife was concerned. It was however noted that whilst incidents did occur in other areas, some of these were reported less frequently. It was suggested an overlap of incidents with the PSPO map would be beneficial (particularly the golf course).
- It was remarked that only the main lake had been included in the proposed PSPO and the Silt lake had not been included in the revised area ('Option X'). It was commented that wildlife existed around all lakes within the park, where dogs were walked and it was therefore moved by Councillor Lanzer (seconded by Councillor T Belben) that the Cabinet be requested to consider the inclusion of the Silt Lake within the PSPO area. A vote was taken and upon being put to the Commission, the proposal was declared to be lost.
- Concerns were expressed that public consultation had not taken place on the proposed PSPO. Although some members also queried if subsequent responses would significantly add value and would delay the implementation. It was proposed by Councillor Lanzer and seconded by Councillor K Khan that the Cabinet be requested to consider a further consultation exercise on the proposed 'Option X'. Following a vote, the recommendation was declared as carried.

Having considered all the matters in detail, and as a result of the comprehensive discussion and subsequent voting, the Commission noted the report and felt that the views expressed above along with the following recommendation was appropriate to be referred to the Cabinet:

RESOLVED

That the Commission:

Requests that the Cabinet consider a further consultation exercise on the proposed 'Option X'.

2. Cabinet Agenda Item 8 – Treasury Management Outturn 2021-2022

Comments and Recommendations

The Commission considered report [FIN/575](#) of the Head of Corporate Finance.

During the discussion with the Leader of the Council, Head of Corporate Finance and Chief Accountant, the following points were expressed:

- Clarification was offered on the maturity structure together with number of detailed holdings. It was confirmed most were on fixed rate of return, with only the Money Market Funds and Strategic Fund being variable rate.
- Confirmation that there was an error within the Non-Treasury Investment table concerning the valuations for Ashdown House and Atlantic House were reversed. This resulted that the rate of return was incorrect for these two properties and should have read 7.96% for Atlantic House and 7.52% for Ashdown House. The Treasury report show only those investment properties that we purchased for that purpose.
- Recognition that the current investment properties were valued on an annual basis and provided a good rate of return. It was felt that it would be beneficial to receive a detailed holdings table of commercial properties to allow further analysis to take place
- Explanations were sought and obtained on the details provided within appendices.

RESOLVED

That the Commission noted the report and requested that the views expressed during the debate, were fed back to the Cabinet through the Commission's Comment sheet.

3. Cabinet Agenda Item 9 – Financial Outturn 2021-2022 (Quarter 4)

Comments and Recommendations

The Commission considered report [FIN/572](#) of the Head of Corporate Finance. During the discussion with the Leader of the Council, Head of Corporate Finance and Chief Accountant, Councillors made the following comments:

- Acknowledgement that the report documented the financial viability of the council. It was recognised that revenue streams had increased due to car parking and community centres together with the Hawth Theatre management fee.
- Confirmation that the Hawth agreement was the repayment of the capital grant occurring over the four-year contract extension period.
- Recognition that that the cost of living and inflation were a concern and would have an overall impact on the Council's finances in areas such as suppliers' costs and energy prices would be just one of the significant challenges in the future

- Verification was provided on the delay to major works at Milton Mount flats due to a late design change coming from Sussex Building Control.
- Clarification was sought on specific details within the report and those provided within appendices.

RESOLVED

That the Commission noted the report and requested that the views expressed during the debate, were fed back to the Cabinet through the Commission's Comment sheet.

4. Cabinet Agenda Item 16 – Online Benefits

(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 FIN/573 of the Head of Corporate Finance.

During the discussion with the Leader of the Council, Head of Corporate Finance and Transformation Officer, the following comments were made:

- Support for the creation of a self-service channel for customers to make claims, report changes, access information and respond to communication online, via a secure portal which would be available 24/7.
- Recognition that as part of the Transformation programme there was an expectation and commitment to deliver channel shift by moving services online. However it was acknowledged that there was also a need to assist those who were more vulnerable or less 'internet savvy' to be supported by Older Persons Services, Housing Officers, Contact Centre and voluntary groups.
- Acknowledgement that the procurement approach would look to provide best value, whilst automating services and improving customer experience.

RESOLVED

That the Commission noted the report and requested that the views expressed during the debate, were fed back to the Cabinet through the Commission's Comment sheet.

5. Cabinet Agenda Item 17 – Telford Place Land Proposal

(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/86 of the Head of Strategic Housing Services.

During the discussion with the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Housing and the Housing Enabling & Development Manager, the following comments were made:

- Recognition that the site at Telford Place had significant potential to contribute towards meeting Crawley's housing needs. There was support for the mix of housing and it remained a site of strategic significance within the context of achieving residential development within the town centre.
- Acknowledgement that the development opportunity would be subject to a planning application, which would address development characteristics, water neutrality, scale of the building, car parking and any potential impacts.

RESOLVED

That the Commission noted the report and requested that the views expressed during the debate, were fed back to the Cabinet through the Commission's Comment sheet.

Councillor T Belben
Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Commission
4 July 2022