



REPORT TO:

Cabinet

4 November 2019

LEAD MEMBER:

Councillor Grenville Chamberlain, Chairman, Scrutiny and Overview Committee and Councillor Brian Milnes, Vice Chairman, Scrutiny and Overview Committee

Update from Scrutiny and Overview Committee

Purpose

1. This report is to inform Cabinet of the discussions and recommendations agreed by the Scrutiny and Overview Committee at its meeting of 17 October 2019, which Cabinet may wish to take into account in its decision making.

Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) : Proposed gating of Setchel Drove, Cottenham

2. The committee heard representations from two representatives of Cottenham Parish Council, the local member for Cottenham and three local residents including the largest landowner and farmer whose land was accessed from Setchel Drove.
3. Parish Council representatives and the local member for Cottenham spoke in support of a PSPO being introduced to restrict access to Setchel Drove by means of a gate in order to disrupt and prevent fly-tipping. They made the following points:
 - Fly tipping was a widespread problem and local people had lost confidence in reporting it to the Council as they felt that fly tips were not cleared quickly enough.
 - Gating the road was part of the solution and care was needed regarding where to situate the gate, so that those needing to access the drove were not made vulnerable when opening or closing the gate. The parish council was willing to manage a gate code for an automated gate.
 - The Drainage Board supported the gating of Setchel Drove as it felt this would prevent rubbish from blocking culverts, which would prevent flooding.
 - A physical barrier and surveillance cameras should be trialled.

The local residents spoke against this proposal and made the following points against it:

- They raised concern about the safety of the farmers who had to use Setchel Grove. Farmers had experienced physical intimidation and they felt that a gate would put them in danger by having to leave their vehicles in order to open and close the gate. It was pointed out that farmers had to access the drove throughout the winter, including in the dark.
- There was concern over veterinary access in the event of an emergency during which farmers could not leave their animals in order to open the gate.

- There was concern regarding access at harvest time, with contractors needing to access Setchel Drove constantly at this time.
 - A gate would not stop the fly tipping and would displace it elsewhere, potentially in front of the gate, which would make access to Setchel Drove more difficult and impact farming operations more negatively than the fly tipping currently did.
 - A gate would be vandalised, as had happened with CCTV shortly after it had been installed.
 - A gate would take away freedom of access by the village to Setchel Drove.
4. The committee discussed the proposals in light of the comments made by the public speakers. Members were keen that options for more covert CCTV that transmitted images immediately, be investigated. Committee members expressed concern that those who used the drove most frequently did not want a gate to be installed and would find this more of an inconvenience than the fly tipping. It was felt that a gate created a conflict between preventing fly tipping and the legitimate use of and public access to Setchel Drove.
 5. Some committee members felt that the Police were not doing enough to tackle the problem and that the Police and Crime Commissioner's response to the Council, which had been included in the agenda papers, was inadequate. The committee nominated Cllr Douglas de Lacey to write to the PCC regarding this.
 6. The committee did not reach a conclusion on whether or not it supported the installation of a gate at Setchel Drove. Due to the complexity of the issue and the public interest in it, the committee supported the final decision on this issue being taken by Cabinet.

General Fund Capital Programme Update and new bids

7. The committee considered and commented on the performance of the Capital Programme 2018/19 and considered the new Capital Programme bids from 2020/21.
8. The committee suggested that Shared Service priorities and projects, such as the Data Centre Generator listed under IT Investment projects, should reflect the Council's objective of being green to the core.
9. The committee indicated its support for the recommendations to Cabinet.

Property Acquisition – 270 Science Park

10. The committee's feedback in respect of the above report is included separately as the report to Cabinet contains exempt information by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Property Acquisition: Colmworth Trading Estate, St Neots

11. The committee's feedback in respect of the above report is included separately as the report to Cabinet contains exempt information by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Greater Cambridge Local Plan: Issues and Options consultation

12. The committee received and noted the Lessons Learned and Good Practice review, the Statement of Consultation and provided comments on the report and supporting documents:
 - Comments were provided on the formatting of the document, which some members found difficult to read; appendices needed to be labelled and the use of colour on colour needed to be avoided.
 - The importance of using plain English, avoiding acronyms and explaining these, as well as the need for a larger glossary, was highlighted.
 - Reassurance was sought that the Local Plan website would be fully accessible.
 - Concern was raised regarding water resilience and confidence on this issue needed to be provided to communities.
 - Consideration should be given in the Local Plan to future changes in society, about which there is uncertainty, such as the heating and cooling of houses, as well as ensuring there was enough electricity to meet future power demands.
 - The committee was keen to see that people from further afield geographically, who came to the district to work, were also consulted.
13. Cllr Heylings attended the meeting to provide comments as Chairman of the Climate and Environment Advisory Committee (CEAC):
 - The CEAC was positive about the issues and options document, including its focus on climate change and biodiversity issues.
 - Cllr Heylings requested a workshop be held to bring together bodies, including the Environment Agency, to look at the water cycle strategy. The idea of water neutrality should be discussed at this workshop and the environmental consequences of spatial choices made in the plan should also be looked at.
 - Thought needed to be given to what we were trying to get out of the questions being asked in the document and whether they generated useful information.
 - Water efficiency should be addressed in the housing quality section, as well as in the climate change section.
14. The committee considered the proposed timing and length of public consultation. The committee favoured the consultation starting in January 2020 to avoid the Christmas period. If consultation started in January, the committee suggested that pre-consultation engagement should be undertaken. It was also suggested that the consultation document and questions be made available as far in advance as possible of the consultation start date. This would enable parish councils which may only meet once every two months, to start considering their consultation responses.

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