

**Minutes of a meeting of Scrutiny Committee for Community,
Leisure and Parking
held on 01 February 2023
from 7.00 pm**

Present: Anthea Lea (Chair)
A Boutrup (Vice-Chair)

P Chapman	J Edwards	M Pulfer
R Clarke	S Ellis	R Whittaker
J Dabell	I Gibson	
B Dempsey	T Hussain	

Absent: Councillors K Adams, R Cartwright and A Sparasci

Also Present Councillors De Mierre and Webster
as Cabinet
Members:

**1 TO NOTE SUBSTITUTES IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE
RULE 4 -SUBSTITUTES AT MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES ETC.**

Councillor Whittaker substituted for Councillor Adams.

2 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were received from Councillors Adams, Cartwright and Sparasci.

**3 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS IN RESPECT
OF ANY MATTER ON THE AGENDA.**

Councillor Gibson declared an interest in relation to Item 8. Extension of Our Public Spaces Protection Order on Car Cruising, as he is a Member of West Sussex County Council for Imberdown.

**4 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON
16 NOVEMBER 2022.**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, with 12 in favour and 1 abstention.

**5 TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN AGREES TO TAKE AS
URGENT BUSINESS.**

The Chairman had no urgent business.

6 AIR QUALITY.

Lucy Corrie, Assistant Director Communities, introduced the report noting that the air quality in the Mid Sussex District area was generally good, remaining in line with objectives and steadily improving with only one Air Quality Management Area in place at the Stonepound Crossroads.

A Member raised concerns regarding the visibility of 'Cut Engine, Cut Pollution' signage at Haywards Heath train station. Adam Dracott, Team Leader for Environmental Protection, advised due to safety issues it was not possible to increase the size, however, officers would consider installing more signs if required. In response to installing pollutant sensors in specific areas of Haywards Heath, he advised that traffic levels and the distance between the road and relevant receptors and the consequent levels of emissions did not warrant this.

Members emphasised the importance of continued Air Quality monitoring at Stonepound Crossroads and Copthorne given the recent housing developments. In response to a Member query regarding how general emissions were monitored, the Team Leader advised the Air Quality monitoring station at East Grinstead monitors both Nitrogen Dioxide and Particulate Matter emissions, providing accurate data for both. On the issue of particulate matter emissions, as these are produced from distant sources, local action is less relevant and action at a national level is required through Central Government strategies.

Regarding the locations of the diffusion tube monitoring sites in East Grinstead, the Team Leader confirmed the locations and that data is available. He advised a trial was underway with West Sussex County Council to monitor pollution and use these data to influence the 4-way traffic light sequencing at Stonepound Crossroads. In response to the impact of pollution on the Ashdown Forest, Judy Holmes, Deputy Chief Executive advised the Council worked closely with Wealden Council and East Sussex County Council to mitigate the impact of pollution and increased traffic through a Strategic Management plan and SANG Management plan.

At the Chairman's request, the Team Leader for Environmental Protection and Simon Hughes, Director People & Commercial Services provided an update on improving and promoting cycle routes between Sayers Common and Hassocks and the installation of EV charging points.

The Cabinet Member for Community thanked Members for their comments and questions. He emphasised Stonepound Crossroads was the only area of Air Quality Management in the District given the thorough monitoring systems in place.

As there were no further questions, the Chairman took Members to a vote on the recommendation which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

The Scrutiny Committee:

- endorsed the approach of the Council on Air Quality Management.

7 APPLICATION BY PART OF THE LICENSED HACKNEY TRADE TO AMEND THE TAXI LICENSING POLICY.

Lucy Corrie, Assistant Director Communities introduced the report which presented a request to amend the Taxi Licensing Policy relating to the age of vehicles used by the Trade. The Committee were requested to either recommend the request is declined or recommend the Council engages in a 6-week consultation to amend the current Taxi Licensing policy.

The Chairman emphasised that from a licensing perspective, when considering the proposed options, public safety was a priority.

Members discussed the recommendations in detail and the advantages and disadvantages. A Member raised concerns regarding the significant impact on affected individuals versus the impact on the Council's sustainability strategy. Jon Bryant, Senior Licensing officer advised no comparative assessment had been carried out and this would be difficult to capture. In response to the cost of conducting a consultation in terms of officer time and other resources, he noted this would be high.

Discussion was held on the signatures contained in the petition. The Senior Licensing Officer confirmed of the 74 signatures in the petition, approximately 3 to 4 were private hire drivers and the remainder were Hackney Carriage drivers. He noted that the overall total of licensed drivers in the District is approximately 500.

A member noted in another District Council, Electric Vehicles were exempt from an age restriction. The Senior Licensing Officer confirmed this was up to individual Councils and they are not exempt under the current MSDC licensing policy.

It was noted that the policy had been introduced in 2012 and rolled out in 2017 giving Taxi drivers sufficient time to be aware of the stipulations.

The Cabinet Member reminded the Committee it was important to consider those who had left the Trade as a result of the restriction and those who had already purchased new vehicles.

The Chairman considered the views expressed by the Committee and moved the following recommendation, which was seconded by Councillor Whittaker:

That the Committee

- (a) *Recommend to the Cabinet Member that the request is declined and the vehicle age restrictions continue to be enforced at 10 years.*

The Chairman took Members to a vote on this recommendation, which was agreed, with 10 in favour, 1 against and 2 abstentions.

RESOLVED

The Scrutiny Committee agreed to:

- a) Recommend to the Cabinet Member that the request is declined and the vehicle age restrictions continue to be enforced at 10 years.

8 EXTENSION OF OUR PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER ON CAR CRUISING.

Lucy Corrie, Assistant Director Communities, introduced the report which sought the approval of the Committee to extend the existing Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) around Burgess Hill for a further three years, due to expire in April 2023 and to include an additional two areas to the PSPO. She reminded the Committee the PSPO was adopted by the Council to tackle car cruising in Burgess Hill in 2020. Since its adoption the number of complaints regarding car cruising had fallen considerably. The Assistant Director also noted officers recognised activities may move to other areas that are not enforced, including Job's Lane off A2300 outside Burgess Hill and Birches Industrial Estate off Imberhorne Lane, East Grinstead. Before a PSPO can be extended or put in place a consultation must be carried out this was completed between November 2022 and December 2022.

A Member expressed disappointment at the lack of responses to the consultation, however, having spoken to residents in the affected areas, car cruising was an issue.

As there were no further questions, the Chairman took Members to a vote on the recommendations in the report which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

The Scrutiny Committee agreed to recommend to Council that it:

- (i) Note the contents of the report;
- (ii) Agree to extend the existing PSPO for a further three years under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 for the prohibited activities outlined in the existing Order at appendix 5 within the area defined on the map at appendix 1;
- (iii) Agree to implement the PSPO under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 for the prohibited activities outlined in the existing Order at appendix 5 within the two additional areas defined on the maps at appendices 2 and 3.

9 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNITY, LEISURE AND PARKING WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23.

Louise Duffield, Director of Resources and Organisational Development introduced the report which set out the schedule of business for the remainder of 2022/23 and noted that at the request of the Chairman, an update on the Leisure Centres contract would be provided at the next meeting.

The Chairman moved to a vote on the recommendation in the report which was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

The Scrutiny Committee noted the Committee's Work Programme as set out at paragraph 5 of this report.

10 QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.2 DUE NOTICE OF WHICH HAS BEEN GIVEN.

None.

The meeting finished at 7.55 pm

Chairman