
Council



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Title of Report:	Report by Cllr Ian Houlder Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
Report No:	COU/SE/14/011	
Report to and date/s:	Council	16 December 2014

This report covers the meetings of the Committee held on 3 September 2014 and 22 October 2014.

3 September 2014

1. Update on On-Street Parking, Skyliner Way, Bury St Edmunds

- 1.1 The Committee received Report F102, which reminded Members of a Councillor Call for Action request brought to the Committee on 3 March 2010, highlighting on-street parking problems in Skyliner Way, Bury St Edmunds. The solution provided at that time by Councillor Beckwith was to provide additional off-street parking at the commercial premises or to create a full-length layby along Skyliner Way. The report provided an analysis of the problem of vehicles parking in Skyliner Way, Bury St Edmunds and confirmed that the appropriate parking standards had been applied to the development in the area at the time permissions were granted.
- 1.2 Suffolk County Council (SCC), as the Highway Authority had introduced some parking restrictions to help with the movement of traffic but admitted that there were limitations to what could be achieved within the present highway layout. SCC is currently reviewing the county-wide parking standards for residential properties in view of the changes in national guidance.
- 1.3 The Committee considered the report in detail and asked a number of questions to which the Western Area Highways Manager (Suffolk County Council) and the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services duly responded. In particular, discussions included the continued expansion of the Suffolk Business Park; the development of a further 500 houses, a new school and football club in the area; on-street parking and the risk of disbursement into residential areas; the parking needs of employees and how many required parking; how many cars

parked along Skyliner Way; what powers had the Planning Authority in placing demands on businesses for parking; freighter lorries parking in the evenings along Skyliner Way instead of using the lorry park and creating a full length layby.

1.4 The Committee suggested a number of potential solutions, such as looking into accessing funds from the SCC On-Street Parking Account for a layby in Skyliner Way; persuading businesses to lease out any free parking spaces they had to other businesses and looking into land availability for a future car park in the area, which would generate revenue.

1.5 The Committee recommended that:

- (1) the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services vigorously examines all opportunities to alleviate parking issues in Skyliner Way, Bury St Edmunds by working closely with colleagues at Suffolk County Council Highways Authority to address current and future parking issues by:
 - (i) exploring the provision of a layby along Skyliner Way and submits a bid for funding from the Suffolk County Council Highways Authority On-Street Parking Account;
 - (ii) exploring opportunities for businesses to lease their free parking spaces to other businesses;
 - (iii) exploring with Suffolk County Council land availability for developing a new car park in the area;
 - (iv) exploring other funding opportunities available to the Council; and
- (2) the Committee receives quarterly updates on progress.

2. Work Programme Update

2.1 Members considered its work programme and it was suggested that the Committee might wish to consider scrutinising the Cabinet System (Leader and Executive model); how it is operating and the role of Members across the Council as a number of councils are moving from the Cabinet System back to a Committee System.

2.2 It was further suggested that the Committee might also wish to consider scrutinising Shared Services by looking at each department individually.

2.3 The Committee **noted** its current work programme and the Scrutiny Officer agreed to provide Members with the Work Programme Suggestion Form for completion to enable Members to provide further information on their suggested topic areas for future consideration by the Committee.

22 October 2014

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2. Outdoor Advertisements and Signs, St Edmundsbury Borough

- 2.1 The Committee received report F155 (previously circulated), which reminded Members of the findings from the Task and Finish Group set up by the Committee on 16 November 2011 to look at the issue of advertising boards on the highway ("A" Boards). The Committee had recommended that a permit scheme for "A" Boards should be implemented by an amendment to the Street Vending scheme to include "A" Boards and planters. Having now explored the practicalities of implementing the scheme, the Cabinet had asked that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be re-consulted on the way forward, through report F155.
- 2.2 Report F155 informed the Committee that, following a review of the proposals, its aspirations in relation to "A" Boards might be better achieved through the use of the Outdoor Advertisement Regulations 2007. The Head of Planning and Regulatory Services already had the power to use the Regulations and could use them to achieve the original objectives of the Committee. It was explained that the Street Vending Policy would not offer an appropriate level of control or status in law, and that it would have added another element that businesses would have had to apply through to get an advert agreed.
- 2.4 The Committee considered the report in detail and asked a number of questions to which the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services duly responded. In particular discussions included the work that had previously been carried out by the Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group; the safety issues around "A" Boards sited on pavements; how the consultation on the Regulations would be undertaken with relevant retailers, Chambers of Commerce; Ward Members, Town and Parish Councils etc.; and the process involved in applying for a permit from the Suffolk County Council Highways Authority.
- 2.5 Members suggested that a section could also be included in the West Suffolk Shop Front and Advertisement Design Guidance, which was about to go out to consultation. The Head of Planning and Regulatory Services explained that this document was a local planning document and agreed that a "rider" could be included setting out what retailers should and should-not do with regards to the design and size of "A" Boards.
- 2.6 Members were also concerned about the various stages/organisations that retailers had to go through in order to apply for an "A" Board and felt that clear guidance should be produced on how the process would work.
- 2.7 The Committee recommended to Cabinet:
- that in view of the Committee's wish to achieve the original objectives of its review of "A" Boards as quickly as possible:
- 1) the approach of using the Outdoor Advertising Regulation 2007 to control the use of "A" Boards throughout the Borough, be approved;
 - 2) the Street Vending Policy be amended by deleting the section relating to "A" Boards; and

- 3) the Council produces and publishes clear guidance to businesses on how the Outdoor Advertising Regulations would work in practice, including partnership working with the Highways Authority.

3. Quarter 2 Directed Surveillance Authorised Applications

- 3.1 The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Directed Surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources) Order 2010 requires that Members should scrutinise the authority's use of its surveillance powers on a quarterly basis. In June 2010 it was agreed that this requirement should be fulfilled by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.2 The Monitoring Officer advised that in Quarter 2 no such surveillance had been authorised.

4. Work Programme Update

- 4.1 Members considered its current work programme and were advised that a completed work programme suggestion form had been received suggesting a review of Shared Services as a whole, rather than by individual departments as originally suggested.
- 4.2 This would be included on the Committee's agenda for 17 December 2014, for further consideration. Appropriate officers and Portfolio Holder(s) would also be invited to attend the meeting to aid the Committee's discussions.
- 4.3 There being no decision required, the Committee **noted** the current work programme.