

Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee

13th September 2021.

Present: Councillor Khonat, in the chair, Councillors Oates Sidat, Taylor, and McFall

Also Present: Martin Eden, Director of Place

Gavin Prescott, Head of Development and Planning

Paul Conlon, Democratic Services.

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting and received apologies from Councillors Humphrys and Zamir Khan.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 13th July 2021.

The minutes of the meeting held on 13th July were submitted. The attention of the committee was drawn to the feasibility study for the Queens Park area and it was agreed that the information would be provided to the committee.

Resolved- that the minutes of the meeting held on 13th July were approved as a correct record and signed by the chair.

4. Environmental Impact on neighbourhoods of land and property that are not maintained and actions the Council can take to mitigate this.

The Committee received a presentation on the work of the Place area on the way that the Council can take action to ensure that the actions taken to on land not owned by the Council to improve the environment. The committee looked at what actions could be taken where private owners were failing with their duty to maintain the property and were having a detrimental effect on the whole of the community.

Members were informed of the powers that the Council had at their disposal and how these could be used to drive improvements.

These were-

- Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – Section 215
- Building Act 1984
- Housing Act 1985, Section 17 – Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs)
- Environmental Protection Act 1990 – Section 59, 80,
- Anti-Social Behaviour Crime & Policing Act 2014 – Section 43 – 58
- Public Health Act 1936 – Section 78

- Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949

The Committee looked at examples that had resulted in improvements in the borough and the way that the officers had worked to land owners to ensure that they fulfilled their legal duties and the steps that had to be taken under each power should negotiations not produce results. The Committee were informed of the limits of powers and the duty of the magistrate's court to consider cases brought by the Council. The level of fines that were imposed by courts was discussed and the way these differed from case to case and personal circumstances. The level of deterrent was discussed and the alternative wordings that could assist in delivering a tougher message was discussed and that people had to be made to think before they failed to take action.

The Committee discussed the issues that related to adopted highways and cleaning and especially back alleys. Members highlighted the issues that they faced from residents bringing them issues which related to un-adopted areas covering and how many of them were unaware of their responsibilities and requirements as the land owners.

RESOLVED-

1. That the officers be thanked for their informative and helpful presentation
2. That the Director of Place be requested to draw up a list of the top ten hot spots for members information and the possible actions that we could use to make a difference in these areas.
3. That ways of helping communities in keeping areas clean such as assisting in monitoring known dumping hotspots be considered and reported back to the Committee
4. That consideration be given to leaflets to be given to residents of areas adjoining non adopted highways informing them of the difficulties that the Council faces in cleaning non adopted back alleys and their responsibilities and the law.

5. Work Programme for the Committee

The Committee were informed that the following discussions with members and the chair, the next meeting of the Committee would look at trees and how these were dealt with in the borough. The Committee would also look at the effects of ash die back and the strategy for dealing with this.

RESOLVED-

That the arrangements for the next meeting of the Committee be noted.

Chair at the meeting where the minutes were signed.....

Date.....