

Place Select Committee

A meeting of Place Select Committee was held on Monday, 25th November, 2019.

Present: Cllr Chris Barlow(Chairman), Cllr Louise Baldock(Vice-Chair), Cllr Pauline Beall, Cllr Julia Cherrett, Cllr Luke Frost, Cllr Mohammed Javed, Cllr Hilary Vickers, Cllr Alan Watson, Cllr Bill Woodhead MBE

Officers: Dale Rowbotham, Andrew Ruddock (CS); Tony Wrigglesworth (EGDS); Gary Woods (MD)

Also in attendance:

Apologies:

**PLA
15/19** **Evacuation Procedure**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and the evacuation procedure was noted.

**PLA
16/19** **Declarations of Interest**

There were no interests declared.

**PLA
17/19** **Minutes of the meeting held on 21st October 2019 for approval / signature**

Consideration was given to the minutes from the meeting held on the 21st October 2019.

AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 21st October 2019 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

**PLA
18/19** **Monitoring the Impact of Previously Agreed Recommendations**

Consideration was given to the assessments of progress on the implementation of the recommendations from the Scrutiny Review of Management of Memorials.

The main issues discussed were as follows:

- Recommendation 1 – data shows that the very high compliance rates around grave personalisation continue across each of the Borough's five cemeteries.
- Recommendation 2 – there are approximately 12 masons operating across Teesside, six of which are involved within Stockton-on-Tees on a regular basis. Of these, three masons attended the presentation on the 7th September 2018 which covered rules on the placement and sale of kerbs, and the problems associated with unauthorised kerbs.
- Recommendation 3 – the management of the new extension was progressing well, mainly as this was a pre-planned initiative and was accompanied by a new clear policy. The potential in extending this initial pilot (which provides choice over the type of grave in the Durham Road cemetery extension) to other cemeteries across the Borough would be determined following a further period of analysis, and Members requested that another

update was provided to the Committee in around six months' time.

- The Committee commended all those involved in the comprehensive work undertaken around this sensitive issue since the review was completed in 2018.

AGREED that:

- 1) the Progress Updates be noted and the assessments for progress be confirmed.
- 2) a further update is provided around the pilot (offering choice over the type of grave) in the Durham Road cemetery extension in six months, as requested.

PLA 19/19 Monitoring the Impact of Previously Agreed Recommendations

Consideration was given to the assessments of progress on the implementation of the recommendations from the Scrutiny Review of Disabled Parking (Task & Finish).

The main issues discussed were as follows:

- Recommendation 1 – identifying the fraudulent use of Blue Badges outside schools was included as part of the Council's enforcement duties, though such incidents need to be either observed or reported-in to the Council for investigation. Pressures on enforcement resources was noted, and Officers would liaise with the Council's legal team regarding the severity of any offence, and any subsequent prosecution (up to £1,000). Members felt that the introduction of prosecutions for the fraudulent use of Blue Badges should be communicated to the public to promote awareness of this development (e.g. via Stockton News).
- Recommendation 1 – active patrols to specifically identify fraudulent Blue Badge use were not being undertaken as this was already part of daily enforcement measures. However, if any suspicions are raised, Officers will follow this up.
- Recommendation 2 – confirmed that the audit of disabled bays across the Borough was conducted on Council-owned car parks, not those privately-run whose disabled bay provision is a matter for landowners. The audit has raised issues around the width and / or depth of some spaces, and the final report following the completion of the audit will address this and other concerns around current provision.
- Recommendation 2 – Members were assured that the Committee would receive the final report reflecting the findings of the audit before anything is implemented, and that it would cover Council-owned car parks across Borough's six town centres, including routes from disabled parking bays to towns, suitability of current bays, and proposals to address identified shortfalls. In light of the time taken since this review was completed, Members requested

that the final report on the audit was presented to Committee in February 2020 (instead of March 2020 as stated) as part of the next progress update.

- In related matters, Members drew attention to the rise in private car parks across the Borough, and the legalities around the issuing of parking tickets. Confusion around whether people should or should not pay a fine they receive from a private car park is something that needs addressing.

AGREED that:

- 1) the Progress Updates be noted and the assessments for progress be confirmed.
- 2) the final report on the audit (recommendation 2) be presented to the Committee in February 2020 as part of the next progress update, as requested.

**PLA
20/19** **Work Programme 2019-2020**

Consideration was given to the Place Select Committee Work Programme for 2019–2020.

The Committee was informed that the Council's Executive Scrutiny Committee had approved for the Contaminated Land topic (on the Work Programme for this Committee) to become an Officer-led reporting-in review as considerable progress has been made in relation to a refreshed strategy. A detailed report will therefore be presented to the Committee in the coming months for consideration, comment and questioning.

Following recent developments in relation to the ongoing Grenfell Tower public inquiry, the Link Officer involved in the previously completed Scrutiny Review of Fire Safety of High Rise Residential Buildings (Task & Finish) will be contacted to ascertain if any updates can be provided on the outstanding recommendation (linked to the public inquiry) that still needs signing-off.

AGREED that the Place Select Committee Work Programme be noted.

**PLA
21/19** **Chairs Update**

The Chair had nothing further to update.