



Audit & Governance Committee Wednesday, 24 February 2016

ADDENDA

12. Request from Performance Scrutiny Committee (Pages 1 - 2)

At their meeting on 4 February the Performance Scrutiny Committee considered the the decision of the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Hudspeth substituting) made on 14 January 2016 following proper notice of a call in: Proposed Bus Lane & Parking/Waiting Restrictions - Orchard Centre (Phase 2), Didcot

The Committee agreed to refer the decision back to Cabinet on the grounds of material concerns in that the officers dealing with the matter had not been made aware of the fact that a 1500+ signature petition had been presented to Council opposing the proposal.

During discussion Members heard that the petition had been taken into account in consideration of the County Council's response to the planning application determined by South Oxfordshire District Council. In response to questions, officers confirmed that it had not been specifically referred to in that response.

Members in noting that the petition had been submitted to full Council raised concerns that local members had not been advised of the petition and kept informed of the response. The Committee considered that something extra was needed with regard to the protocol on Member engagement and requested that Audit & Governance Committee be requested to consider this matter.

The Committee is RECOMMENDED to agree that the Monitoring Officer review the protocol on Member Engagement with a specific regard to petitions and to report back to this Committee.

Members are asked to note the additional request and recommendation attached.

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Agenda Item 12

An additional request was made by the Performance Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 18 February during consideration of the decision by officers in relation to the Headington pipeline.

Members of the Committee expressed concern that local councillors had not been kept informed of the grant of Section 50 licences that resulted in significant road works in their area. In noting that there was protocol on member engagement the Committee requested that this Committee look at the effectiveness of the protocol generally.

The Committee also discussed what constituted a key decision and whether it was right that decisions relating to a major project could be broken down into separate notices and thus not be considered as a key decision. The Committee asked that Audit & Governance Committee request officers to review the definition and interpretation of key decisions.

An amended recommendation is suggested:

The Committee is RECOMMENDED to agree that the Monitoring Officer:

- (a) review the protocol on Member Engagement with regard to petitions and its general effectiveness;***
- (b) include a review of key decisions in the next constitutional review.'***

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