

Minutes

Community Development Scrutiny Committee

4th May 2022



Present

Councillors	Present	Councillors	Present
Mrs C Dervish	Yes	Mrs J Pell	Yes
Mrs D Garrod (Chairman)	Yes	Miss M Weeks	Yes
A Hensman	Yes	Mrs S Wilson	Yes (Vice-Chairman)
Mrs A Kilmartin	Apologies	B Wright	Yes
W Korsinah	Yes		

1 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

INFORMATION: There were no Interests declared.

2 **MINUTES**

DECISION: The Minutes of the meeting of the Community Development Scrutiny Committee held on 16th February 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

INFORMATION: There were no statements made, or questions asked.

4 **SCRUTINY REVIEW INTO MARKETS AND ASSOCIATED EVENTS WITHIN THE BRAINTREE DISTRICT – INTRODUCTION TO TERMS OF REFERENCE AND WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23**

INFORMATION: Members of the Community Development Scrutiny Committee gave consideration to a report which introduced them to the latest topic for the purposes of Scrutiny Review, 'Markets and Associated Events within the Braintree District.' Miss J Mann, Governance and Members Officer, presented the report to Members and outlined the Terms of Reference (TOR) and the anticipated Work Programme for 2022/23 to the Committee.

The topic of 'Markets and Associated Events' was first submitted by Councillor Mrs D Garrod, Chairman of the Committee, as a means of analysing how markets have been regulated and managed by the Council over the last five-year period and to help unify the Council's approach to markets in this respect. Following extensive discussions with Management Board and the Chairmen of the four Scrutiny Committees, it was agreed to that the topic should be allocated to the Community Development Scrutiny Committee for the purposes of Scrutiny Review. A secondary topic entitled 'Bereavement, Burials and

Cremation' was also submitted by Councillor Mrs Garrod for potential Scrutiny Review; however, it was agreed that this would be a reserve topic only for the Committee.

In conducting their Scrutiny Review, Members were asked to be mindful that due to the District Elections in May 2023, the Review would need to be concluded by March 2023, which included the determination of any recommendations from the Review and composition of the final scrutiny report. Should it emerge over the course of the Review that additional meeting dates were required, Governance Officers would work with Members in order to incorporate these within the Committee's Work Programme.

The Committee was then invited to consider any next steps that they wished to take in order to progress their Scrutiny Review. During the discussion, it was acknowledged that the District Council was not the only provider of markets within the area and that in line with the TOR, it would be appropriate for Members to explore other markets and acknowledge their statutory basis. Members were advised that they would not be able to explore market charters as part of their Review; however, a potential future witness for the Review could be a representative of the agent for the Lord of the Manor. It was then added that although other evidence streams could be explored, the Committee's primary focus should remain on those markets and associated events that were within the Council's remit. Members were also reminded of the need for them to explore the topic through the lens of communities and to be the 'critical friend' of the organisation.

It was highlighted that Governance Officers were already in the process of identifying internal contacts within the organisation who could come and speak to the Committee in order to assist with its evidence gathering; these contacts included officers in the Council's Operations and Marketing and Communications teams. Governance Officers also welcomed the assistance of Members in identifying any further internal or external contacts who could attend future meetings. Accordingly, Councillor Mrs Pell agreed to provide the contact details of the agent for the Lord of the Manor.

Members were reminded that they were required to explore the topic through the context of markets and the associated events, not social events. As part of their Scrutiny Review, one of the key elements which Members should seek to address was around the cost-effectiveness of markets and associated events for both the organisation and for residents across the District. Given this, one such line of enquiry that Members might examine were the fees and charges levied against such events. In terms of other witnesses for the Review, Members might also consider inviting the relevant Cabinet Members to future meetings of the Committee in order to answer questions around the provision of markets (e.g. the composition of markets across the District, how they are promoted, etc).

The Chairman then identified a number of lines of enquiry that the Committee might undertake, which included examining the impacts of lockdown on markets and local communities, the pros and cons of holding markets, whether the holding of markets and associated events offered value for money (benefits vs the costs of clean up) and the Council's level of involvement in initiatives such as the 'Young Market Traders' national campaign. Potential witnesses that the Chairman would like to invite to future meetings of the Committee included internal contacts such as the Council's Market Officers and the Cabinet Member for Economic Growth. In terms of external contacts, representatives from outside bodies were listed which included the National Market Traders Federation and the National Association for British Market Authorities (NABMA). It was added that neighbouring Local Authorities could be contacted on the subject of their approach to markets and how this compared with the District Council's (e.g. Parish and Town Councils, County Council, etc).

Members were encouraged to give consideration to any questions that they wished to ask of witnesses at future meetings and to contact the Governance team with the details of these. In doing so, Members were also reminded to keep their lines of questioning within the remit of the TOR.

Governance Officers subsequently agreed to make approaches to the Council's Market Officers about attending the next meeting of the Committee. It was also agreed that other witnesses that had been identified, such as the Council's Cabinet Member for Economic Growth, would be invited to future meetings.

DECISION: That Members:-

- 1) Agreed the Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Review into 'Markets and Associated Events within the Braintree District;'
- 2) Noted the anticipated Work Programme of the Committee for 2022/23, and;
- 3) Considered the steps they wished to take next in order to commence the Scrutiny Review.

REASON FOR DECISION: To outline the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Scrutiny Review into '*Markets and Associated Events within the Braintree District,*' which have been agreed by the Chairmen of the four 'Scrutiny' Committees together with the support of Governance Officers and Management Board. The report also outlined the anticipated Work Programme 2022/23 for the Community Development Scrutiny Committee.

To ensure that the Scrutiny Review into '*Markets and Associated Events within the Braintree District*' is completed within a stipulated timeframe and that it is in compliance with the Council's procedural rules for Scrutiny.

The meeting commenced at 7.15pm and closed at 7.49pm.

Councillor Mrs D Garrod
(Chairman)