

NOTICE OF MOTION – CLLR L LYONS – CONSTRUCTION SITE NOISE LIMITS

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

Executive Summary

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the Notice of Motion at its meeting on 7 June 2021. An extract from the draft minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is attached at Appendix 1. The Executive is invited to take into account the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee when considering the Motion.

Recommendations

The Executive is requested to:

RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL That

the measures as proposed within the report, together with the measures recommended by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as set out below, be adopted.

- i) Ward Councillors to be consulted where a Prior Consent Notice has been submitted requesting noisy works outside of usual hours, to the extent this is practically possible, before a decision is made;**
- ii) a quarterly report be prepared and submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee providing details of noise complaints received; and**
- iii) the communication with local residents on upcoming noisy works be improved by the use of the Council website and social media, ensuring consistency of the use of direct communication to local residents such as letters and door knocks.**

Reasons for Decision

Reason: To consolidate existing arrangements.

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Background Papers: None.

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Appendix 1

Extract from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee Minutes

The below minute extract is from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting that was held on Monday, 7 June 2021 from Agenda Item 7 - Pre-Decision Scrutiny: Notice of Motion from Cllr Lyons.

“The Chairman introduced Geoff McManus and Emma Bourne, who provided the background to the report on the Notice of Motion from Councillor Liam Lyons on construction site noise limits.

Ms Bourne explained the process of how developers and contractors applied for noisy works and that there was a 28 day deadline for officers to respond with a decision. Examples of the large scale projects that required approval for noisy works were shared with the Committee, and it was noted that out of hours works were sometimes essential for various reasons including the health and safety of the public and contractors.

The Committee discussed the process and it was suggested that Ward Councillors should be consulted on the out of hours noise applications. However, it was noted that there were drawbacks to the suggestion which could potentially cause a delay to officer’s work. It was further felt that delays would be incurred if the decisions were to be made by the Planning Committee, and the Members were not supportive of this recommendation. The current process of delegated authority by the Environmental Health team was explained.

The number of complaints for noisy works in 2020/21 was 105, and officers advised that multiple complaints could be received for the same site. The building projects themselves varied from conservatory extensions to large scale developments. Members requested further details of the complaints and it was agreed that a quarterly report detailing the complaints received would be provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The reporting function would provide Members with the chance to monitor the complaints rather than being heavily involved in the application process. The categorisation of the data in the report would be discussed outside of the meeting however the suggestion to include figures for dust complaints was also welcomed by Councillors.

The Members were passionate about informing residents and, in order to ensure that they were informed of any upcoming disruptions, it was agreed that the information would be posted on social media platforms, which could easily be shared by Ward Councillors. Officers would strive for consistency when informing residents and ensure that door knocks, letters and information on the website were actioned.

The Members of the Committee were supportive of the officer report with the added quarterly reporting, and suggested the wording of the final recommendations should be amended to allow more flexibility for officers. However, the Members highlighted the importance of a political influence in the decision making process. The Committee noted the importance of clear two-way communication with officers and Ward Councillors on the disruptions within their Ward.

The Chairman summarised the following points after the discussion:

- i) where a Prior Consent Notice had been submitted requesting noisy works outside of usual hours, Ward Councillors were to be consulted, to the extent this was practically possible, before a decision was made;
- ii) a quarterly report was to be prepared and submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee providing further details of noise complaints received; and

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- iii) improve the communication to local residents for upcoming noisy works by the use of the Council website and social media and ensure consistency of the use of direct communication to local residents such as letters and door knocks.

RESOLVED That

the comments of the Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be reported to the Executive.”