

Minutes of the meeting of the **SCRUTINY (COMMUNITY AND REGENERATION) COMMITTEE** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Wednesday, 15 March 2017 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor L A Keen

Councillors: P J Hawkins
T A Bond
P I Carter
M J Ovenden
G Rapley

Officers: Team Leader – Democratic Support
Democratic Support Officer

80 APOLOGIES

There were apologies for absence received from Councillors P M Brivio, G Cowan and N Dixon.

81 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, Councillor M I Cosin was appointed as a substitute for Councillor P M Brivio.

82 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

83 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 January 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

84 PUBLIC SPEAKING

The Team Leader – Democratic Support advised that no members of the public had registered to speak on items on the agenda to which the public speaking protocol applied.

85 ISSUES REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY COUNCIL, CABINET, SCRUTINY (POLICY AND PERFORMANCE) COMMITTEE OR ANOTHER COMMITTEE

There were no items of business to consider.

86 ITEMS CALLED-IN FOR SCRUTINY OR PLACED ON THE AGENDA BY A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE, ANY INDIVIDUAL NON-EXECUTIVE MEMBERS OR PUBLIC PETITION

There were no items of business to consider.

87 NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING KEY DECISIONS

The Team Leader – Democratic Support presented the Notice of Forthcoming Key Decision to the Committee for its consideration.

RESOLVED: That the Notice of Forthcoming Key Decision be noted.

88 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Team Leader – Democratic Support presented the Scrutiny Work Programme to the Committee for its consideration.

RESOLVED: That the Work Programme be noted.

89 SOUTHERN WATER

The Committee welcomed Chris Perkins (Network Performance Manager), Andrew Adams (Asset Manager Wastewater Infrastructure), Sarah Feasey (Stakeholder Engagement Manager (Kent)) and George Csatos (Senior Project Manager) from Southern Water to answer key questions set by members of the Committee.

Water Meters

Q1. Can you please advise the number of complaints in the last 12 months in respect of water meter readings in the Dover District and how has this figure changed from the previous year?

A written response was provided prior to the meeting and published as a supplement to the agenda.

Councillor T A Bond was aware of a constituent who had made numerous complaints regarding their water meter. It was possible that the constituent may not live within the jurisdiction of Southern Water and that the water meter could be the responsibility of Affinity Water. Councillor Bond would contact Sarah Feasey direct with the constituent's details.

Infrastructure

- Q2. The literature given to residents states that the householder is responsible for the pipe connection between the water meter and the house. How can the resident be responsible for a pipe between the water meter and the house holders boundary? The householder does not own the land, did not lay the pipe under the land and had no say as to the position of the water meter.

A written response was provided prior to the meeting and published as a supplement to the agenda.

Members requested that a copy of the Water Act 2011 which identified the responsibility of the pipework be provided by Southern Water and forwarded to all Members.

Councillor P I Carter advised that there were issues with the water supply in Dover Road, Sandwich and that he had concerns over the impact of a new housing development nearby. In response, Southern Water advised that a capacity check would have been conducted in advance of any housing development.

Flooding in Deal

- Q3. Can Southern Water give an assurance that since the suspected cause of the flooding in Albert Road Deal is known and the money that has been spent on the pumping station that there will be no flooding in this area as a result of their drainage system?

A written response was provided prior to the meeting and published as a supplement to the agenda.

On the main, remedial work to prevent further flooding had been completed. A Tide Flex Valve had been installed to prevent coastal drift shingle blocking the outfall and removed the need to remove shingle daily. There were now three sewer level monitors to give an early warning of potential flooding which would allow time to enable Southern Water's emergency plans and the capacity of the pumping station was based on a 1 in 50 year event.

Members expressed concern that Quinn Estates residential development would be built before all measures to prevent further flooding had been tested. Furthermore, Members queried the maximum capacity of the model in place and should more houses be built, including the Quinn Estates development, whether the risk of flooding would increase and affect the 1 in 50 year model. Whilst Southern Water were not statutory consultees for planning applications, they were advised of and commented on applications and would ask for conditions when necessary.

Members requested that the officer report for any housing development of over 20 houses considered by the Planning Committee should include a capacity check in respect of the impact on the flood risk in the area.

Whitfield Development

- Q4. Where are Southern Water in so far as their system for disposal of foul waste from the Whitfield Urban Expansion is concerned and at what point in

terms of numbers of occupied new homes will Southern Water upgrade the existing systems?

A written response was provided prior to the meeting and published as a supplement to the agenda.

Southern Water stated that the Whitfield scheme was currently in the design stage and there was no construction date as yet. They were currently investigating the infrastructure needs to service the entirety of the development as well as the potential build out rates so that the stages at which new infrastructure would be required could be established. Members would be kept up to date of the progress of the plans by Southern Water.

Members were advised that the Southern Water's current capacity check had shown there was no spare capacity available in Whitfield and this would be the basis of any response on the next stages of the development.

Southern Water was liaising with Abbey Homes to improve capacity at the pumping station and over infrastructure issues related to the housing development. Abbey Homes had been instructed to disconnect the chalk pit from the Southern Water's network as the surface water that was getting into the system was adversely affecting its capacity for foul water.

- Q5. On Saturday 31st December 2016, sewage washed into Phase 1a at Sandwich Road as the pump had failed yet again and tankers were called in and a pipe burst up Sandwich Road pouring raw sewage everywhere. Plus there is an overflow tank which is connected to the pumping station which regularly overflows and spews raw sewage all over the site and it is my understanding that this tank has no cover, so if the system is already failing when only a fraction of the homes have been built when are Southern Water going to upgrade that part of the system.

A written response was provided prior to the meeting and published as a supplement to the agenda.

Southern Water advised that Kent County Council were working on reducing surface water getting into the foul water system and contributing to the overflowing of the raw sewage.

Members requested that Southern Water state that no further construction be undertaken until the current problem is rectified as the current system does not have the capacity however, whilst Southern Water were aware there was not the capacity they were unable to stop the development as they were not statutory consultees to the planning application.

- RESOLVED: (a) That Southern Water be thanked for attending the meeting and answering Members' questions.
- (b) That it be recommended to the Cabinet that the officer report for any housing development of over 20 houses considered by the Planning Committee include a capacity check in respect of the impact on the flood risk in the area.

The meeting ended at 8.30 pm.