

Minutes of the meeting of the **SCRUTINY (COMMUNITY AND REGENERATION) COMMITTEE** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Wednesday, 17 January 2018 at 6.01 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor L A Keen

Councillors: S F Bannister (as substitute for Councillor N A G Richards)
T A Bond
P I Carter
G Cowan
R J Frost
B J Glayzer (as substitute for Councillor G Rapley)
P J Hawkins
M J Ovenden

Officers: Head of Community Services
Community Development Manager
Funding and Communication Manager
Democratic Services Manager
Democratic Services Officer

93 APOLOGIES

There were apologies for absence received from Councillors G Rapley and N A G Richards.

94 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, Councillor B J Glayzer and S F Bannister were appointed as substitutes for Councillors G Rapley and N A G Richards respectively.

95 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

96 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 13 September 2017, 19 September 2017 and 13 December 2017 were deferred to the next meeting.

97 PUBLIC SPEAKING

The Democratic Services Manager advised that no members of the public had registered to speak on items on the agenda to which the public speaking protocol applied.

98 DECISIONS OF THE CABINET RELATING TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SCRUTINY (COMMUNITY AND REGENERATION) COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the decision of Cabinet relating to recommendations from the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee be noted.

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

There were no items of business for consideration.

100 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 for consideration.

101 NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING KEY DECISIONS

The Democratic Services Manager presented the Notice of Forthcoming Key Decisions to the Committee for its consideration.

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

102 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Democratic Services Manager presented the Scrutiny Work Programme to the Committee for its consideration.

Members requested the Democratic Services Manager to reschedule the Private Sector Landlords (PSLs) meeting to February and to include a meeting with Environmental Health officers to discuss noise nuisance to the Work Programme, which should be brought forward to the meeting in February failing a PSL reschedule.

In addition, members requested an update from officers on Manston Airport to be added to the Work Programme for a future meeting, date to be arranged.

RESOLVED: That the Work Programme be noted subject to the inclusion of the following:

- (a) Environmental Health – Noise nuisance
- (b) Update from officers on Manston airport

103 COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

The Committee received a Communication and Engagement Update presented by the Head of Communication and Engagement, the Funding and Communication Manager and the Community Development Manager.

A presentation was shown to the Committee and set out the service priorities as followed:

Community Services

- The development of strong, sustainable communities
- To support communities to help themselves
- To support young people into the workplace
- To inform and engage people about services and projects
- To secure external funding to support key projects
- To deliver a cost-effective service

Communication Strategy

- Providing effective communication, tailored to individual needs
- Promoting engagement with council business
- Promoting community cohesion
- Promoting new investment – Invest in Dover
- Promoting skills – Skills4Dover, Jobs Fair
- Promoting the district as a great place to live, work and play
- Crisis communication

Community Development

- Building capacity within our communities so that they are better equipped to support themselves
 - skills and resources to organise and run events
 - engage and co-ordinate volunteers
 - establish new community groups
 - identify and apply for funding
 - access training, etc.
- Working with Members to support communities to deliver services or events
- Take suggestions and advice from members in relation to community services e.g. Snow Wardens

Members and officers discussed various projects the teams had been involved in which included the Jobs Fair and grants presentations which members welcomed and congratulated officers on the success of the events. The Community Development team were involved in 46 community projects and were pleased to have initiated the Inspire Fund which had been established to provide funding support to help young people who were facing challenges by helping them to create

new friendships, introduce them to healthy lifestyles through sport, and open new doors into work with opportunities to learn new skills. The Inspire Fund was evidence of the success of the recently merged Community Safety and Community Development teams by providing intervention and prevention in its approach.

Funding was available to communities and groups for various projects and Members were encouraged to subscribe to Keep Me Posted to get regular updates on funding opportunities and to help share knowledge of the funding opportunities available to the groups. The Funding and Communication Manager was available if Members or the public had any project ideas that they would like to discuss and to be assessed for funding.

The Committee was informed that Dover District Council had the biggest social media following in East Kent. The Keep Me Posted platform, which provided news and alerts by email, had in excess of 50 topics to subscribe to and 60k subscribers. The success of Keep Me Posted and other social media platforms could be monitored and assessed through the growth of subscriptions and social media followers as well as gathering information on the length of time of each visit to a page and further navigation from a page which was valuable in assessing public engagement.

In addition, the social media platforms and Keep Me Posted emails kept subscribers informed of upcoming council meetings and agendas. Councillor L A Keen was encouraged by the public attendance and engagement at Parish Council meetings in Aylesham and that the PC's paper newsletter helped to communicate this information to residents regularly. Members were keen to encourage more public attendance and participation at meetings of DDC and being mindful that not all residents had access to social media it would benefit from the same method of communication to its residents. Officers highlighted the cost implications this would have and that social media communication was instant, cost effective and could reach thousands of engaged residents. As a cost effective resolution members requested that Cabinet consider the possibility of including DDC contact details and social media links within the council tax bill sent annually to all residents to encourage public engagement at meetings and events.

Councillor Keen wanted to have newsletters, leaflets and surveys available to the public in the reception area of the DDC offices to measure the public's satisfaction and effectiveness of the communication they receive. The Head of Communication and Engagement was aware that East Kent Services, who ran the reception area, already distributed surveys to visitors and would ask them to provide feedback on the quantity and comments received.

RESOLVED: That the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee recommend to Cabinet that officers be requested to look into including information on the various ways the public can contact the council and the services it provides with the council tax bill sent to all residents annually.

The meeting ended at 7.47 pm.