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Minutes of the meeting of the **SCRUTINY (COMMUNITY AND REGENERATION) COMMITTEE** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Wednesday, 13 July 2016 at 6.01 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor L A Keen

Councillors: T A Bond
P M Brivio
P J Hawkins
S Hill
M J Ovenden

Officers: Head of Inward Investment
Team Leader – Democratic Support
Democratic Support Officer

The following persons were also present and spoke in connection with the following items:

<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Agenda Item</u>
Ms R Rechter	Minute No. 20 (Scrutiny Briefing Paper on Secretary of State Powers Relating to Onshore Oil and Gas Applications)

11 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P I Carter, N Dixon and R J Frost.

12 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no substitute members appointed.

13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

14 MINUTES

The consideration of the Minutes was deferred to the date of the next scheduled meeting.

15 PUBLIC SPEAKING

The Team Leader – Democratic Support advised that 1 member of the public had registered to speak in respect of Minute No. 20 (Scrutiny Briefing Paper on Secretary of State Powers Relating to Onshore Oil and Gas Applications) as per the provisions of the protocol on public speaking.

16 VARIATION OF THE ORDER OF AGENDA ITEMS

The Chairman proposed that, with the consent of the meeting, the order of the agenda items be varied to take Agenda Item 11 (District Regeneration Update)

followed by Agenda Item 10 (Scrutiny Briefing Paper on Secretary of State Powers Relating to Onshore Oil and Gas Applications) next in proceedings.

RESOLVED: That the order of the agenda be varied to take Agenda Items 11 (District Regeneration Update) and 10 (Scrutiny Briefing Paper on Secretary of State Powers Relating to Onshore Oil and Gas Applications) next in proceedings.

17 DISTRICT REGENERATION UPDATE

The Head of Inward Investment presented the District Regeneration Update to the Committee.

The overall objectives for regeneration in the Dover District were:

- To grow the district's population, and in particular the number of working age families;
- To make the district a destination of choice for living, working, visiting and shopping;
- To develop quality new housing to improve the market perception;
- Create new jobs and improve skills;
- Improve ease of travel to, from and within the district; and
- Protect the district's heritage and utilise it to support regeneration.

The key points raised in the update were as followed:

Heritage

The Kearsney Parks were benefiting from a £3.2 million Heritage Lottery Fund project.

St James (Dover Town Investment Zone)

The St James development would provide 157,000 square foot of retail and leisure space. The retail/leisure investors announced so far included Cineworld, Travelodge, Frankie and Benny's, Nandos, Bella Italia, M&S, Next, Trespass, Costa, Poundland and Brantano. It would create 580 new jobs and was expected to be completed by autumn 2017.

Members were advised that Legal and General had invested £53 million in the DTIZ and Kier had been awarded a building contract worth £24 million.

An invitation was extended to Committee to join the Dover Town Investment Zone (DTIZ) site visit being conducted for Members of the Scrutiny (Policy and Performance) Committee on 29 September 2016.

Discovery Park

The Committee was advised the Discovery Park had reached 61% occupancy with 140 tenant companies. In total there were 2,400 jobs on site including 700 retained by Pfizer. So far in 2016, the Discovery Park had seen 12 expansions, 6 renewals, 18 new tenants and 7 new start-ups.

A new manufacturing complex was to be built by Instro Precision and a timber manufacturing factory for OFP had been approved.

A housing development for 500 units was also planned for the Discovery Park.

The Open Golf Championship

The Open Golf Championship held at Royal St George's, Sandwich in 2011 was estimated to be worth £80 million to the surrounding area and attracted 200,000 people to the district. It was estimated that 30,000 of those visitors had come by train.

There was the potential infrastructure for The Open to return to Royal St George's in the future with 2020 suggested as a possible earliest date.

The Committee was advised that people going to the golf would want to watch the golf during the day and that the challenge for the district was to provide sufficient opportunities in the evening for people to want to stay in the local area after the golf was finished for the day.

It was suggested by Members that given how quickly hotel space booked out for The Open, that the opportunity for the provision of properly resourced camp sites in the area should be explored as a way of providing additional accommodation that would keep visitors local.

Apprenticeships and Skills

The Head of Inward Investment advised that 900 new apprenticeships had started in 2014/15. Members queried the number of apprentices that had gone on to full time employment at that end of their apprenticeship period.

In response to a question from Councillor L A Keen, the Head of Inward Investment agreed to take up with the Planning Delivery Manager the matter of whether Aylesham had a local employment strategy in place for the Garden Village development.

The Dover Skills and Business Expo was scheduled to be held on 15 November 2016. Members emphasised the importance of getting schools to attend the local skills fairs and the need for suitable local employment to enable the district to retain its skilled young people. The Head of Inward Investment agreed to explore if it was possible to involve local schools more with the skills fair.

Western Heights

The Head of Inward Investments advised that the proposed development would see a balance of old and new development with Victoria Hall being retained and the Drop Redoubt being refurbished. In addition, £500,000 of funding had been secured for the proposed Commonwealth Ward Memorial.

Dover Western Docks

The £120 million works for the Western Docks would see the construction of 2 new cargo berths, a marina and a waterfront development. It would generate 600 new jobs.

Hadlow College Development

As part of the Hadlow College Development, a £7.5 million Visitor Centre and Kent Mining Heritage Museum would be constructed. There would also be a restaurant, café and conference facilities. There was also master planning underway for a sustainable business park and in total 1,000 new jobs were expected to be created.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

18 SCRUTINY BRIEFING PAPER ON SECRETARY OF STATE POWERS RELATING TO ONSHORE OIL AND GAS APPLICATIONS

The Team Leader – Democratic Support presented the briefing paper on the Secretary of State's Powers Relating to Onshore Oil and Gas Applications. The briefing paper had been written in response to a matter raised by Councillor B J Glayzer.

The Committee was advised that Kent County Council was the responsible planning authority for onshore oil and gas drilling applications and that the role of Dover District Council in respect of any applications would be to make consultation comments.

The Department of Communities and Local Government in 2015 introduced a non-statutory scheme to record the speed of decision making by planning authorities in respect of onshore oil and gas applications. Those authorities identified as underperforming in accordance with the criteria set out by the scheme would be actively considered for intervention by the Secretary of State for Department of Communities and Local Government using the existing powers to 'call-in' a planning application for determination.

However, where an application for onshore oil and gas was 'called-in' the Council would still be able to make consultation comments to the resultant planning enquiry in the same manner that it could if it was being considered by Kent County Council. As a consequence the Council would still be able to fulfil the resolution adopted in November 2013 in respect of onshore oil and gas applications.

RESOLVED: That the Committee continue to monitor the situation and in the event of the designation of Kent County Council as an underperforming local planning authority for onshore oil and gas applications an urgent report be made to the Committee.

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

There were no items of business.

20 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.

21 NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING KEY DECISIONS

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

The Committee identified 2 items for inclusion within the Work Programme.

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

- (b) That items 15 (Review of Aylesham Village Expansion Development Agreement) and 17 (Project Approval for the Refurbishment of Normal Tailyour House) be included within the Work Programme.

22 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

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

Members agreed to include the following matters within the committees rolling work programme:

- a presentation on the enforcement of planning conditions and details of what constituted a major variation on an application;
- a meeting with East Kent Housing's new Chief Executive to discuss service improvements; and
- a further update from Southern Water on progress in solving flooding in Deal.

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

- (a) a presentation on the enforcement of planning conditions and details of what constituted a major variation on an application;
- (b) a meeting with East Kent Housing's new Chief Executive to discuss service improvements; and
- (c) a further update from Southern Water on progress in solving flooding in Deal.

The meeting ended at 7.16 pm.