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11 September 2021

Dear Councillor

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at the meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** on Monday 13 September 2021 at 6.00 pm, the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

4 **MINUTES** (Pages 2 - 9)

To confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 14 June 2021 and 12 July 2021.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nicky", written over a white, wave-like shape that matches the Dover District Council logo.

Chief Executive

Minutes of the meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Monday, 14 June 2021 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor C D Zosseder

Councillors: M Bates
T A Bond
P M Brivio
S C Manion
M Rose
R S Walkden
P Walker
H M Williams

Officers: Strategic Director (Corporate Resources)
Head of Community and Digital Services
Private Sector Housing Manager
Democratic and Corporate Services Manager
Democratic Services Officer

15 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence received.

16 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

The Democratic and Corporate Services Manager advised that no notice had been received for the appointment of substitute members.

17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

18 MINUTES

The consideration of the Minutes of the previous meeting on 24 May 2021 was deferred.

19 DECISIONS OF THE CABINET RELATING TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The decisions of the Cabinet relating to recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on 7 June 2021 were noted.

20 ISSUES REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY COUNCIL, CABINET, OR ANOTHER COMMITTEE

The Democratic and Corporate Services Manager advised that there were no issues referred to the Committee by Council, Cabinet or another Committee.

21 NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING KEY DECISIONS

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

In the absence of any dissent, it was agreed that the Notice of Forthcoming Key Decisions be noted.

22 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

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

RESOLVED: That the Work Programme be noted.

23 PUBLIC SPEAKING

The Democratic and Corporate 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.

24 REVISED HOUSING ASSISTANCE POLICY

The Private Sector Housing Manager presented the report on the Revised Housing Assistance Policy.

The intent of the revised Housing Assistance Policy was to simplify the process for applicants. The current policy, which dated from 2017, consisted of several different grants and it was not uncommon for applicants to have work funded from up to four different grants/loans each requiring a separate application. This also included the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) that all Councils were legally required to provide, and which was funded from the Better Care Fund.

The main focus of the Council's discretionary Housing Assistance was in respect of:

- Schemes to improve the health and independence of persons with disabilities
- the elderly and those with long term health conditions
- To reduce the number of homes with serious hazards
- To enable more effective use of the Disabled Facilities Grant
- To encourage empty homes back into use

Members were advised that one of the key revisions to the policy was to replace the Disabled Adaptation Grant (DAG) with a Disabled Independence Grant (DIG). The new grant would deal with most situations so that in future an applicant would have either a DFG or a DIG.

The main features of the new DIG were:

- The grant would have a maximum limit of £38,000. The maximum limit on DFGs was £30,000 and for DAGs it was £20,000.
- It would include provision for repairs of up to £3,000. Repairs were not currently included in DFG or DAG grants.
- Grant conditions would only apply for grants that exceeded £15,000. In contrast, conditions for DFGs started at £5,000.

There were also a number of other grants available as followed:

- Disabled Home Assistance Grant which was only available to persons receiving a Disabled Facilities Grant or a Disabled Independence Grant. The application had to be made by the homeowners.
- Disabled Relocation Grants were available where a person was eligible for Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) assistance, but where the property was unsuitable for adaptation to their specific needs, or the Council believe it would be more reasonable or practical to move and adapt another property. The maximum assistance available was £20,000 comprising of a grant covering 70% of the eligible cost.
- Disabled Adaptation Loan was available where a person was in receipt of a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) or the Disabled Independence Grant (DIG) and where the Council, in consultation with Kent Social Services, was of the view that it is necessary, reasonable and practicable for the DFG adaptations works to exceed the maximum grant limit. In such circumstances a loan of up to £20,000 would be made available to fund the cost of eligible works that exceeded the DFG maximum.

The Council had also employed its own Occupational Therapist (on a part-time basis) to speed up the processing of grants.

Members were advised that the Council's scheme was one of the most generous in Kent and that any unused funding each year would be carried over and be made available for the following year.

That it be recommended to Cabinet that decision CAB5 be endorsed as follows:

- (a) That the existing Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy be amended in order to simplify and improve the assistance available to disabled residents.
- (b) That the Head of Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health, be authorised to make further minor changes to the policy.

25 FOOD POVERTY REVIEW

The Democratic and Corporate Services Manager presented the draft Food Poverty Review to the Committee for its consideration. The Head of Community and Digital Services was also present to provide advice to Members on a number of areas relating to the Review and the work of the Council with the Community and Voluntary Sector.

Members welcomed the news that the Council had increased its grant to the Citizens Advice Bureau, which included work to help with debt advice and fuel poverty.

Members discussed the following points in respect of the Food Poverty review:

- To acknowledge that this was not just a local issue
- To welcome the news that the Council was working with Deal Town Council and Members in respect of a potential food pantry project for Deal

- To emphasise the need for more work to be done to encourage the take up of school meal vouchers
- The importance of quality food aid and not just the volume of food aid provided
- The issue of consulting the Salvation Army was raised and in response Members were advised that they were not an active food aid provider in the Dover District
- The importance of being clear about the Council's role in respect of food poverty
- The importance of the multi-agency partnership work that provided food poverty support in the district

It was agreed that the Democratic and Corporate Services Manager and the Head of Community and Digital Services should develop draft recommendations for the Committee to consider at its next meeting.

The meeting ended at 7.23 pm.

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Minutes of the meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Monday, 12 July 2021 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor P M Brivio (Vice-Chairman in the Chair)

Councillors: T A Bond
S C Manion
K Mills
R S Walkden
P Walker
H M Williams

Officers: Strategic Director (Corporate Resources)
Head of Assets and Building Control
Head of Commercial Services
Democratic and Corporate Services Manager
Democratic Services Officer

26 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Rose and C D Zosseder.

27 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, Councillor K Mills had been appointed as substitute member for Councillor C D Zosseder.

28 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

29 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 May 2021 were approved as a correct record for signing by the Chairman.

30 DECISIONS OF THE CABINET RELATING TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The decisions of the Cabinet relating to recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on 5 July 2021 were noted.

31 ISSUES REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY COUNCIL, CABINET, OR ANOTHER COMMITTEE

The Democratic and Corporate Services Manager advised that there were no issues referred to the Committee by Council, Cabinet or another Committee.

32 NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING KEY DECISIONS

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

In the absence of any dissent, it was agreed that the Notice of Forthcoming Key Decisions be noted.

33 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

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

Members considered the inclusion of an item on the 'Greening of the Dover District' for inclusion in the work programme:

In the absence of any dissent, it was agreed that the Work Programme be noted, subject to the inclusion of an item on the 'Greening of the Dover District'.

34 PUBLIC SPEAKING

The Democratic and Corporate Services Manager advised that Councillor J Pout of Aylesham Parish Council had registered to speak on Minute No 36 (Release of Section 106 Monies from Aylesham Village Garden Public Realm Contributions).

In the absence of the registered speaker, the Vice-Chairman read out a statement submitted by Councillor Pout.

35 ELECTRIC HEATING AND PHOTO-VOLTAIC INSTALLATIONS AT AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS AT KIMBERLEY CLOSE AND STOCKDALE GARDENS

The Democratic and Corporate Services Manager advised that this item of business had been withdrawn from the agenda at the request of officers following the meeting of the Cabinet on 5 July 2021.

36 RELEASE OF SECTION 106 MONIES FROM AYLESHAM VILLAGE GARDEN PUBLIC REALM CONTRIBUTIONS

The Committee was advised that the report presented to the Cabinet meeting on 5 July 2021 had been subject to some late revisions that had created the perceived uncertainty around the use of the S106 resources for grounds maintenance in Aylesham.

It was emphasised that the additional S106 resources were required as the Council had taken on additional grounds maintenance responsibilities in Aylesham and that it was not intended that they be used for elsewhere in the district. This was in accordance with the S106 agreement.

Councillor L A Keen, with the permission of the Committee, spoke to express her concerns over the report and any implication that S106 monies reserved for use in Aylesham would be spent elsewhere in the district. In addition, she felt that the lack of consultation with Aylesham Parish Council on this matter within the last four years needed to be addressed.

Members raised concerns over the perceived uncertainty as to the allocation of the Aylesham S106 monies and sought reassurance from officers that it would be used in accordance with the agreement.

Councillor O C de R Richardson informed the Committee that he had noted the points made by Members and that he would report these back to the members of the Cabinet.

It was moved by Councillor K Mills, duly seconded by Councillor R S Walkden, and

RESOLVED: That it be recommended to Cabinet that the decision of Cabinet taken on 5 July 2021 under decision reference CAB 15 should not be implemented until Cabinet has received a further report which clearly identifies both the geographic areas within the district in which the new resources are to be deployed and appropriate means of financing the new resources having regard to the principal that section 106 monies received for the maintenance of the public realm in Aylesham cannot be used to defray expenditure incurred on grounds maintenance elsewhere in the district.

37 FOOD POVERTY REVIEW

Councillor P M Brivio introduced the draft Food Poverty Review document to the Committee. She drew Members' attention to the draft recommendations to the full Council set out in the document.

Members welcomed the document and noted the important work that was being undertaken in the district on this issue.

It was moved by Councillor K Mills, duly seconded by Councillor H M Williams, and

- RESOLVED: (a) That the Food Poverty Review be submitted to the full Council for consideration.
- (b) That it recommended to the Council that it request the Cabinet form a Food Poverty Working Group on the following basis:
- (i) That the objective of the food poverty working group be to investigate ways in which the Council can assist in tackling the issue of food poverty and its underlying causes in the district and as part of this how the Council can support the vital role undertaken by the voluntary and community sector.
 - (ii) That the working group membership be politically balanced.
 - (iii) That a representative from the Cabinet be appointed to the working group.
 - (iv) That the working group be administratively supported by the Head of Community and Digital Services.
 - (v) That the working group be time limited to two years of operation and be required to report to Cabinet on its conclusions at the end of that period.
 - (v) That the final Terms of Reference be determined by the Cabinet taking into account points (i) to (v).
- (c) That the Council recognises the importance of the work undertaken by Community Services in respect of deprivation and food poverty issues.

- (d) That the Council's welcomes the participation by Dover District Council in the East Kent Food Poverty Working Group.
- (e) That the Council notes the excellent work undertaken by the Community and Voluntary Sector in respect of food poverty in the Dover district.

38 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was moved by Councillor K Mills, duly seconded by Councillor R S Walkden, and

RESOLVED: That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the remainder of the business on the grounds that the items to be considered involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

39 AWARD OF 5-YEAR CONSULTANCY CONTRACT FOR HEATING, WATER AND ELECTRICAL SAFETY WORKS

The Head of Assets and Building Control presented the report on the Award of a 5 Year Consultancy Contract for Heating, Water and Electrical Safety Works.

Members considered the report and discussed the process of awarding the contract.

The meeting ended at 7.06 pm.