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15 January 2018

Dear Councillor

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at the meeting of the **SCRUTINY (POLICY AND PERFORMANCE) COMMITTEE** on Tuesday 16 January 2018 at 6.00 pm, the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

4 **MINUTES** (Pages 2 - 13)

To confirm the attached Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 25 October 2017, 14 November 2017 and 12 December 2017.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Nicky", written over a white background.

Chief Executive

Minutes of the meeting of the **SCRUTINY (POLICY AND PERFORMANCE) COMMITTEE** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Wednesday, 25 October 2017 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor K Mills

Councillors: T A Bond
M I Cosin
R J Frost
B Gardner (as substitute for Councillor D A Sargent)
B J Glayzer
P J Hawkins (as substitute for Councillor J M Heron)
S C Manion

Officers: Chief Executive
Director of Shared Services
Acting Head of Customer Delivery
Democratic Services Manager

80 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P M Beresford, J M Heron, M Rose and D A Sargent.

81 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, Councillors B Gardner and P J Hawkins had been appointed as substitute members for Councillors S A Sargent and J M Heron respectively.

82 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

83 EK SERVICES FACE-TO-FACE SERVICE PROVISION AT DEAL AREA OFFICE

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources and Performance, Councillor M D Conolly, introduced the presentation to the Committee.

The Director of Shared Services advised that similar closures had taken place at the area offices in Canterbury City Council and Thanet District Council. Members were advised that the changes to the provision of face-to-face services at area offices in the Dover District was not about forcing people to access services on-line as there was still the option of telephone services and being able to make appointments at the Council Offices in Whitfield. There would also be a home visiting service for those individuals who needed it.

In respect of the Deal Area Office, the 'average' user was a 45-54 year old female without a disability who had travelled 2.19 miles to bring in paperwork and who may

have been in Deal for other purposes as well. The reasons for visits to the Deal Area Office were broken down as followed:

- 33% Benefits
- 21% Parking
- 16% Council Tax
- 8% Other (including non-DDC related matters)
- 7% Waste
- 7% Housing
- 7% East Kent Housing
- 1% Food Voucher

Members were advised that as a result of changes to the benefits system there was a decreasing need for people to bring in paper evidence. These changes included new digital systems, risk based verification and the roll out of Universal Credit. Furthermore, parking charges (which related to 1/5th of customer contacts) could only be dealt with online from November 2017.

Overall, the number of customer contacts had decreased year-on-year since 2015/16.

The proposed alternative access for each category of customer contact was as follows:

- Benefits – Online, post, email, appointments, telephone
- Parking – Online only
- Council Tax – Online, post, email, appointments, telephone
- Other – Email, telephone
- Waste – Online, email, telephone and local issue for bags
- Housing – Telephone, post, email, appointments
- East Kent Housing - Telephone, post, email, appointments
- Food Voucher – Not an EKS provided service

In response to questions from Members it was stated:

- That there would no redundancies arising from the changes as the area office staff would be redeployed to fill currently vacant positions in the call centre. This would in turn relieve pressure on call answer times which was currently not on target. EKS was also looking at recruiting apprentices.
- That the hours during which appointments could be made at the Whitfield Offices had been adjusted to reflect changes in bus timetables.
- That EKS had been working with Age UK/Age Concern to provide assistance for elderly and vulnerable people.
- That EKS had a lone working policy in place and that the home visiting service offered greater control as officers knew the details of the people that they were visiting.
- That much of the required documentation could be submitted electronically now as evidence for benefits.

- That there was not expected to be an impact on local businesses in Deal through the withdrawal of face-to-face customer contact as surveys and staff feedback had indicated that many customers were in Deal for other reasons as well as visiting the area office.
- That a free phone service would be available from the Deal Area Office.
- That approximately half of the forecast £45,000 saving came from the Deal Area Office.
- That the decision was made based on sound evidence and the same logic and reasoning had been used in Whitstable and Ramsgate.

The following points were raised by Members:

- There was concern expressed that the decision was being taken prematurely given the current level of customer contact in the Deal Area Office.
- The capability of many older people to deal with the shift to on-line services.
- The cost and time loss involved in having to travel by public transport from Deal to Whitfield for a face-to-face appointment.
- That the case for achieving financial savings as a result of this decision given that no rent was paid on the Deal Area Office was questioned.
- That the decision to withdraw face-to-face services at the Deal Area Office be deferred until such time as further information on the impact of the decision could be provided to Members.
- That the decision should wait given the Council would be making a decision on outsourcing the provision of customer services in the coming months.
- To question whether the home visiting teams had the capacity to take on additional work.

The Chairman invited members of the public present at the meeting to speak and the following points were raised:

- That the usage levels of the Deal Area Office did not justify the closure.
- That the users of the Deal Area Office were often the most vulnerable and least able to switch to using online services.
- To praise the service provided by staff at the Deal Area Office. This included helping people complete forms and there was concern that this level of assistance could not be replicated via telephone or online.
- That people had experienced problems accessing services by telephone. In addition, that the local rate call charge meant that there was a cost to calling the Council that was not incurred via face-to-face services.

- That increased housing development in Deal would impact on future usage levels.
- That the decision would put pressure on Deal Town Council services as during a previous temporary closure of the Deal Area Office members of the public had gone there under the mistaken belief they could access the services there.

In summing up, Members were advised that the Council faced a significant budget pressure relating to homelessness. The Council would take measures to protect the vulnerable but that most users of the service could make the channel shift to alternative service access even if it wasn't their preferred method.

The decision to withdraw face-to-face services at the three area offices, including Deal, predated the decision to look at outsourcing customer services. The withdrawal of face-to-face services at the three area offices would be accompanied by an implementation plan. This would involve press releases, the provision of information to assist the relevant ward councillors and work to ensure that people were signposted to the alternative ways in which they could access services.

As part of developing the criteria for home visits an Equality Impact Assessment would be undertaken.

RESOLVED: That it be recommended to the Cabinet:

- (a) That the Deal Area Office be kept open until more information can be supplied on the usage of the area office and the impact of its closure, including:
 - (i) The number of disadvantaged and vulnerable users
 - (ii) The impact of Universal Credit
- (b) That in the event that the Deal Area Office is closed:
 - (i) the Scrutiny (Policy and Performance) Committee be assured that training will be provided to Deal Town Council and Ward Members on how the public can access council services and assistance.
 - (ii) That the criteria for defining 'vulnerable' be developed at an early stage.
 - (iii) That regular feedback be provided to the Scrutiny (Policy and Performance) Committee on the impact of the closure of the three area offices.
- (c) That Councillor M D Conolly be thanked for attending the meeting.
- (d) That the members of the public be thanked for attending and contributing to the meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.26 pm.

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Minutes of the meeting of the **SCRUTINY (POLICY AND PERFORMANCE) COMMITTEE** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Tuesday, 14 November 2017 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor K Mills

Councillors: P M Beresford
M I Cosin
T A Bond
B J Glayzer
P J Hawkins (as substitute for Councillor J M Heron)
M Rose
D A Sargent

Officers: Director of Environment and Corporate Assets
Director of Governance
Director of Shared Services
Director of Customer Services
Democratic Services Manager

84 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R J Frost, J M Heron and S C Manion.

85 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4 Councillor P J Hawkins had been appointed as substitute member for Councillor J M Heron.

86 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

87 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 10 October 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

88 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.

89 DECISIONS OF THE CABINET RELATING TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SCRUTINY (POLICY AND PERFORMANCE) COMMITTEE

Members received the decisions of the Cabinet relating to recommendations made by the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet decisions relating to recommendations from the Scrutiny (Policy and Performance) Committee be noted.

90 ISSUES REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY COUNCIL, CABINET, SCRUTINY (COMMUNITY AND REGENERATION) COMMITTEE OR ANOTHER COMMITTEE

There were no items for consideration.

91 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 for consideration.

92 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.

93 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

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

Councillor M I Cosin requested that updates on Universal Credit and Homelessness be provided to a future meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Work Programme be noted, subject to the inclusion of updates on Universal Credit and Homelessness.

94 LORRY PARKING IN THE DOVER DISTRICT

In the absence of representatives from Kent County Council and Kent Police, the Committee received an update from the Portfolio Holder for Access and Licensing, Councillor N J Collor, and the Director of Environment and Corporate Assets.

Members were advised that there was anecdotal evidence from the number of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) that had been issued since the introduction of the clamping scheme being trialled in Ashford lorry parking was being displaced to the Dover District. The trial was set to run for 18 months.

Councillor N J Collor advised that he had informed the Kent County Council Cabinet Member, Councillor Balfour, that he wanted a similar clamping scheme for Dover.

There was also an issue with lorry parking capacity as they were often full by 6pm which meant that vehicles arriving in Dover later had nowhere to park.

Members were advised that the payment rates for FPNs issued to foreign registered lorries remained low as reciprocal recovery in European nations was an issue.

Councillor K Mills expressed concerns that Brexit could result in the lorry holding area in Stanford being used as a clearing area.

At the invitation of the Committee, a member of the public present updated Members on the situation in respect of lorry parking in Dover. He advised that in Menzies Road some of the bollards had been knocked down so that lorries could park there and that the far end of Poulton Close was being used by lorries for parking. The Director of Environment and Corporate Assets advised that the far end of Poulton Close was outside of the area that had been designated for restrictions.

RESOLVED: That the Committee receive a further update on the matter and that Kent County Council and Kent Police be invited to that meeting.

95 UPDATE ON THE REGENT CINEMA

The Portfolio Holder for Property Management and Environmental Health, Councillor T J Bartlett, and the Director of Environment and Corporate Assets provided an update on the Regent Cinema.

Members were advised that although there had been no planning application for the site of the former Regent Cinema received at this time, the Council had remained in contact with the developers and believed that they were still serious in their intention to bring forward proposals. The latest information received was that the developers were still refining their design.

In response to a question over the designation of the site, Members were advised that the Regent was not listed in the local plan as having a community use as it had not been used as a cinema since 1962. A submission to the Local Plan Review process could make the case for the site to be classified as having community use but would also need to demonstrate that such a use was viable.

Members expressed frustration at the lack of a planning application.

RESOLVED: That it be recommended to the Cabinet that the Regent Cinema site be submitted for consideration as a community facility as part of the consultation on the Local Plan.

96 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Director of Governance presented the Performance Report for Quarter 2, 2017/18.

There were 28 Green Performance Indicators (80% of total indicators), 2 Amber Indicator (6%) and 5 Red Indicators (14%) for Quarter 2 2017/18.

The red performance indicators for Quarter 2 2017/18 were as followed:

- EKS026d (Average call waiting time in minutes);
- EKHC2 (Rent arrears as % of annual debit);
- HOU010a (Number of households living in Temporary Accommodation including B&B);
- HOU010b (Number of households in bed and breakfast); and
- LIC005 (The percentage of licensed premises inspections completed by target date)

Members were advised that the figures for HOU010a and HOU010b were based on the number of households in accommodation on the last day of the quarter.

EKS026d

The Director of Shared Services (EK Services) advised that the target of 50 seconds was a stretch target as the previous year's target had been achieved. EKS would be increasing its resourcing with the appointment of 2 new apprentices in addition to the staff being redeployed from the area offices. There had been no call spike seen as a result of the decision taken to withdraw face-to-face services from the Aylesham, Deal and Sandwich area offices.

EKHC2

The Director of Customer Services (East Kent Housing) advised that the target was an end of year target rather than a quarterly target. There had been an impact arising from the roll out of Universal Credit, although it was not yet clear exactly what that impact was, in respect of rent arrears. In respect of the performance indicator the cycle of rent and income was not lining up with the reporting deadlines for the performance indicator.

East Kent Housing had taken a number of measures in respect of the roll out of Universal Credit and tried to address the issue of arrears arising from delay built into the process. As a consequence, the number of evictions for the period to September 2017 was only 1 compared to 6 the previous year.

HOU010a and HOU010b

Members were advised that a report would be submitted to the Homelessness Project Advisory Group on the possible solutions to the issue.

RESOLVED: That it be recommended to the Cabinet:

- (a) That the Performance Report and Actions for Quarter 2, 2017/18 be noted.
- (b) That the Director of Shared Services be requested to provide details on the ratio of calls to staff and the duration and complexity of calls.
- (c) That East Kent Housing be requested to provide a further update on the impact of Universal Credit on arrears to a future meeting of the Committee.

The meeting ended at 7.28 pm.

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Minutes of the meeting of the **SCRUTINY (POLICY AND PERFORMANCE) COMMITTEE** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Tuesday, 12 December 2017 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor M I Cosin (Vice-Chair in the Chair)

Councillors: P M Beresford
T A Bond
R J Frost
B J Glayzer
P J Hawkins (as substitute for Councillor K Mills)
S C Manion
M Rose
D A Sargent
P M Wallace (as substitute for Councillor J M Heron)

Officers: Director of Environment and Corporate Assets
Head of Regeneration and Development
Assistant Planner
Senior Planner (Planning Policy)
Democratic Services Manager

97 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J M Heron and K Mills.

98 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, Councillors P J Hawkins and P M Wallace had been appointed as substitute members for Councillors K Mills and J M Heron respectively.

99 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

100 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.

101 DECISIONS OF THE CABINET RELATING TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SCRUTINY (POLICY AND PERFORMANCE) COMMITTEE

Members received the decisions of the Cabinet relating to recommendations made by the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet decisions relating to recommendations from the Scrutiny (Policy and Performance) Committee be noted.

102 ISSUES REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY COUNCIL, CABINET, SCRUTINY (COMMUNITY AND REGENERATION) COMMITTEE OR ANOTHER COMMITTEE

There were no issues for consideration.

103 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 issues for consideration.

104 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.

105 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

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

Members asked that an update on General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as it applied to the Council be given to a future meeting and that a briefing note be provided to all Members.

Councillor P M Wallace asked if Ms Mahlo could be advised when the issue of Dover Town Centre comes before the committee in light of her previous petition on the matter.

RESOLVED: (a) That the Work Programme be noted.

(b) That the Democratic Services Manager be requested to seek clarification on the pre-scrutiny arrangements in place.

106 AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT

The Head of Regeneration and Delivery presented the Authority Monitoring Report.

Members were advised that the National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) stated that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) must publish information at least annually that showed progress with Local Plan preparation, reported any activity relating to the duty to cooperate and demonstrated how the implementation of policies in the Local Plan were progressing.

Members were reminded that the Council had agreed to commence a Local Plan review and as a consequence the Council was in the process of producing a new Local Plan and Area Action Plan for the Dover Waterfront.

The evidence base that underpinned the plan making was in the course of being reviewed. The reviews of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and the Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) had been completed. Further studies had been commissioned including:

- Retail Needs Assessment;
- North Deal Study;
- Sustainability Appraisal/Habitats Regulation Appraisal;
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment;
- Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (DDC consultation);
and
- The Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment.

In response to a question, it was stated that play areas and green infrastructure would be the subject of reviews.

Members were advised that in planning terms most of Sholden and Walmer were considered to be in the Deal urban area and this was reflected in the figures for development.

As part of the assessment of the local housing market the issue of inward migration was reviewed and it was found that there were no specific issues for the district. However, private rental arrangements by authorities from outside the district would not be registered in this information.

Members highlighted the need to highlight, at least in summary, the infrastructure restraints such as highways issues, utilities and educational provision that constrained development.

RESOLVED: That it be recommended to Cabinet:

- (a) That the Authority Monitoring Report 2016/17 be approved and made available on the District Council's website.
- (b) That in future the Authority Monitoring Report should have a section highlighting the infrastructure constraints that have stopped development.

107 RIVER DOUR ENHANCEMENT WORK AND REPAIRS TO DOLPHIN HOUSE GARAGES

The Director of Environment and Corporate Assets presented the report on the River Dour Enhancement Work and Repairs to Dolphin House Garages.

It was intended that the enhancement work and repairs would be completed prior to the opening of the St James's Development in February as the location abutted the westerly edge of the development near a primary route to the town centre.

Members welcomed the enhancement work to the River Dour but questioned whether the repairs to the garages were being used for car parking or commercial storage. In response to the suggestion that given the low rental income generated by the garages their demolition in favour of creating additional car parking would be a better use of the location, the Director of Environment and Corporate Assets advised that there were some issues of access that might make the site difficult to use as a car park.

RESOLVED: That it be recommended to Cabinet:

- (a) That the business case to carry out the riverside enhancement works be approved.
- (b) That the repairs to the Dolphin House garages not be undertaken in order for the usage (i.e. car parking, commercial storage, etc.) of the garages to be established.

108 OVERNIGHT OPENING OF DEAL PIER

The Director of Environment and Corporate Assets presented the report on the Overnight Opening of Deal Pier.

The provision of overnight opening occurred on Deal Pier each Saturday night/Sunday morning (00.00hrs – 08.00hrs) between April and November each year. It was being reviewed as the current arrangements were no longer financially viable due to a number of factors including low usage levels and also challenges in staffing these hours. The average cost of overnight opening was £116.33 compared to an average income of £45.07 per overnight opening.

The Cabinet had agreed to reduce overnight opening to once a month from April to November, although the Pier would still be available for hire for events. The new arrangements would be staffed by contracted staff and it was hoped that they would be more financially viable through better promotion.

Councillor R J Frost highlighted the importance of linking the overnight opening dates with the best fishing tides (on a four weekly cycle) rather than a set calendar period of once per month.

Members expressed concern over the changes and suggested that staff contracts be reviewed to see if it would be possible to provide for more overnight opening.

RESOLVED: That it be recommended to Cabinet that while the Scrutiny (Policy and Performance) Committee recognises the current situation, the Cabinet be requested to reconsider the decision before implementing it in order to review staffing arrangements with a view to providing for full night opening at Deal Pier.

The meeting ended at 7.42 pm.