

Minutes of the meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Monday, 13 June 2022 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor C D Zosseder

Councillors: T A Bond
D R Friend
D A Hawkes
P D Jull (as substitute for Councillor R S Walkden)
S C Manion
M Rose
P Walker
H M Williams

Officers: Strategic Director (Corporate Resources)
Head of Commercial Services
Head of Leadership Support
Head of Investment, Growth and Tourism (joining remotely)
Head of Regulatory Services
Economic Development and Town Centre Manager
Community Services Manager
Environmental Crime Team Leader
Leadership Support Officer
Democratic and Corporate Services Manager

152 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor R S Walkden.

153 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, Councillor P D Jull had been appointed as substitute member for Councillor R S Walkden.

154 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

155 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 14 March 2022, 25 April 2022 and 16 May 2022 were approved as a correct record for signing by the Chairman.

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

There were no decisions to consider from the most recent meeting of the Cabinet.

157 ISSUES REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY PUBLIC PETITION, COUNCIL, CABINET, OR ANOTHER COMMITTEE

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a petition from Mrs S Beer concerning the following matter:

“There are no enclosed area’s where dogs are able to safely run free, play and socialise provided by Dover District Council. All surrounding Councils provide these, Folkestone having five. Recently my dog who has good recall and only let off lead to play with other dogs in a fairly secure area picked up a scent and before I could stop her she disappeared. She was rescued in the traffic on Whitfield hill, we were so lucky and so grateful to the lady who stopped the traffic to save her, the outcome could have been very different she is now permanently on lead. Since Covid many more people have dogs and safe areas for them are desperately needed. I am hoping that if enough people agree we can change this situation.”

The petition had 262 signatures.

Mrs Beer in addressing the Overview and Scrutiny Committee advised Members that:

- That Deal and Hawkinge both had enclosed dog parks but that there were none in the Dover area.
- That the number of dogs locally had increased during lockdown, reflecting a national rise in dog ownership during that period.
- That while there were private dog parks locally, these were expensive.
- That a dog park would help with the socialisation of dogs.
- That all that was required was a piece of land with secure fencing.

In response the Head of Commercial Services advised that this was something that could be looked in but that the need to find a suitably sized site would limit the number of potential locations. He also advised that Whitfield Parish Council were looking into the option of a small dog park.

Members expressed their support for the objectives of the petition.

It was moved by Councillor P Walker, duly seconded by Councillor T A Bond and

RESOLVED: That officers be requested to bring a report to a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the feasibility of an enclosed dog park in the Dover area.

158 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.

159 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

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

Members identified the following items for inclusion in the work programme:

- Kent Resilience Forum
- Crime and Disorder Updates
- Memorial Items
- Civica – Customer Services
- Dover Leisure Centre (without the public transport element but adding the booking system)
- Neighbourhood Policing Review

Members identified the following items for removal from the work programme:

- Noise nuisance policy
- Street lighting
- Response to covid

In the absence of any dissent, it was agreed that the revised Work Programme be noted.

160 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.

161 PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER

The Head of Regulatory Services presented the report on the Public Spaces Protection Order.

Members were advised that earlier in the year the Cabinet had authorised the undertaking of consultation in accordance with Section 72 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 on a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) relating to street drinking, dog control and unauthorised camping. This was duly undertaken from 21 February 2022 to 14 March 2022.

The 973 comments received had been considered and following this the Cabinet had given approval for the consolidation of the existing two PSPOs by the making of a new PSPO (with amendments) which would come into force with effect from 26 July 2022.

The Community Services Manager advised that Kent Police would be responsible for the enforcement of any matters within their remit and the Council would be responsible for those within its remit, such as dog legislation.

Members raised the following points:

- To ask that the feeding of birds be included in the next review
- To request clarification on how Members and the public can raise concerns and report issues such as dog fouling.

Members were advised that officers were looking into how reporting issues could be made easier for customers.

In the absence of any dissent, it was agreed to note the report.

162 ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT SERVICE DELIVERY OPTIONS

The Head of Regulatory Services presented the report on Environmental Enforcement Service Delivery Options.

Members were advised that following a decision by the Cabinet in 2012 agreed to take a more robust approach to environmental enforcement of crimes such as littering and dog fouling, the Council has predominantly undertaken this through external contractors.

However, following the termination of the most recent contract in January 2022 the opportunity had been taken to review the method of delivering this service and Cabinet had agreed to move the service in-house with the recruitment of a further 3 full time Environmental Enforcement Officers. This was required as the existing Environmental Crime staff were fully engaged in other areas of work such as dog control, fly tipping, duty of care and waste accumulation investigations across the district.

The use of the existing in-house Incident Report Book scheme would also be promoted as this would enable officers from across the Council to report incidents they witnessed whilst undertaking their normal range of duties.

Members raised the following points:

- To welcome the return of the service in-house.
- To query the methodology for estimating Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) levels when compared to the levels generated by external contractors.
- How the budget pressures generated by in-house provision would be addressed.
- The working patterns of the new officers

In the absence of any dissent, it was agreed to note the report.

163 UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND

The Head of Investment, Growth and Tourism remotely presented by Teams the report on the Shared Prosperity Fund.

The Strategic Place, Tourism and Town Centre Manager was present at the meeting.

Members were advised that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) was the Government's domestic replacement for the European Structural and Investment Programme. The funding has been allocated to local authorities using a formula and Dover District Council had been awarded the lowest payment of £1,000,000 over three years, with the largest proportion of the funding received in the final year.

As part of the UKSPF, the Council was required to:

- (a) work with local stakeholders to create a local partnership group;
- (b) consult with MPs requesting them to provide an advisory role and to invite them to be part of the local partnership group;

- (c) have an open call for projects; and
- (d) submit a local investment plan by 1 August 2022

The funding was dependent on the local investment plan getting approval. If successful it was expected that the initial funding would be received in the autumn. The Council had developed a draft investment plan for consultation with local MPs and stakeholders prior to the 'open call for projects' and stakeholder engagement.

The Head of Investment, Growth and Tourism advised that Members would be kept updated on progress.

Members discussed the split between revenue and capital for bids and how the funding would be phased.

In the absence of any dissent, it was agreed to note the report.

164 PERFORMANCE REPORT – FOURTH QUARTER 2021/22

The Head of Leadership Support presented the Performance Report for Quarter 4, 2021-22.

There were 29 Green indicators, 1 Amber indicator, 6 Red indicators and 2 indicators where data was incomplete for Quarter 4, 2021/22. The 6 Red indicators were:

- KPI04 (Percentage of Business Rates collected)
- HOM009 (Former tenant arrears as % of annual rental income)
- ASS02 (Percentage of properties that have current EICR (Electrical Installation Condition Report))
- ACC04 (Percentage of invoices paid on time)
- MUS002 (The number of visits to the museum in person per 1,000 population)
- WAS003 (Number of collections missed per 100,000 collections of household waste)

Members discussed the following points:

- The missing data for WAS010 (Residual household waste per household (kg/hh)) and WAS011 (Household waste sent for reuse, recycling, or composting).
- That despite KPI06 (Average call waiting time in seconds) meeting its target the overall direction of travel for Quarter 4 was worsening.
- The reasons for ACC004 (Percentage of invoices paid on time) not meeting the target for 2021/22. The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) advised that long term sickness had impacted and there had been changes to how it was measured.
- The reasons for ASS002 being a red indicator. Members were advised that while there had been a slight improvement in performance over the quarter it still remained an area of concern. To address this, there had been a decision taken to combine the inspections of the electrical systems with the annual inspections of the boilers for which tenants were more willing to allow access. All remaining outstanding EICRs were being targeted for completion.

In the absence of any dissent, it was agreed to note the report.

165 STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD

The Head of Leadership Support presented the quarterly Strategic Performance Dashboard. Members were reminded that the aim of it was to provide clearer strategic information, better insight as to key issues and trends, and inform problem solving discussions where appropriate.

Members raised the following points:

- To welcome the evolving Strategic Performance Dashboard.
- To point out the duplication of the museum store item

In the absence of dissent, it was agreed to note the report.

The meeting ended at 7.23 pm.