

Public Document Pack

Minutes of the meeting of the **SCRUTINY (POLICY AND PERFORMANCE) COMMITTEE** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Tuesday, 13 November 2018 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor K Mills

Councillors: T A Bond
P I Carter
P D Jull
M J Ovenden
D A Sargent

Also Present: Councillor K E Morris (Leader of the Council)
Councillor S F Bannister
Councillor S J Jones (Dover Town Council)
Town Councillor V A Liotte (Sandwich Town Council)
Ms S Gleave (EU Thinking Dover and Deal)
Mr D Reid (EU Thinking Dover and Deal)
Mr C Precious (EU Thinking Dover and Deal)

Officers: Chief Executive
Director of Environment and Corporate Assets
Head of Leadership Support
Democratic Services Manager

64 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M I Cosin, S C Manion and M Rose.

65 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no substitute members appointed.

66 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

67 POTENTIAL IMPACT OF BRITAIN LEAVING THE EUROPEAN UNION ON THE DOVER DISTRICT

The Leader of the Council, Councillor K E Morris, presented an update to the committee on the work of the Council in preparing for the potential impact of Britain leaving the European Union (BREXIT) on the Dover District.

Members were informed that the BREXIT Task Force report was a neutral, fact based report that covered all the areas, including areas where the Council had statutory duties such as Port Health, relating to the impact on the Dover District. Due to the nature of the information being gathered the BREXIT reports published by the Task Force were only correct at the time of issue.

Members raised the following questions in respect of the BREXIT reports:

- Members were advised that the Leader was lobbying hard to protect the short straits traffic from traffic being diverted to other UK ports. The Port of Dover had also undertaken a lot of work in respect of it. In addition, the Port of Ramsgate was not viewed as a suitable alternative to Dover.
- Members were advised that the Kent Resilience Forum recognised the additional costs involved in Operation Stack and similar traffic management schemes.
- The Leader advised that the Dover and Calais had similar operational concerns in respect of BREXIT and that discussions were taking place.
- That the Kent Resilience Forum was looking into how to keep the district moving during BREXIT – i.e. school buses, delivery lorries, etc.

The Chairman, with the consent of Members, agreed to take questions from representatives of EU Thinking Dover and Deal, through the Chair as followed:

- The Leader advised that the BREXIT Task Force documents were available publicly on the Council's website. The Task Force had been careful to take a neutral position on BREXIT and its overriding concern was the potential impact on Dover.
- There had been strong efforts to raise the Task Force's concerns with Government and a succession of ministerial visits underlined that. However, as the Council was not the police, the port authority, the highways agency or the borders agency there were key issues outside of its remit and in those instances the Council's role was one of advocacy. The Council had been robust and honest in those discussions.
- The Council continued to push for additional funding and the Leader had personally supported a request from the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner for additional funding to cover policing costs.
- The Council was taking active measures to help prepare local businesses for BREXIT and defend their interests. In particular, the Council was concerned about ensuring that there was sufficient support for small businesses dealing with BREXIT technical notices and how local businesses would access the Port of Dover. The Council was seeking to bring the Local Government Association, Kent County Council, Government departments, Highways England and local businesses together in early 2019.
- That the Council had been working hard to promote the Dover District as a tourism destination and that the French and British Governments had recognised the importance of protecting Dover – Calais businesses and tourism.
- That the Council expected the Government to cover the costs arising from matters such as port health as a result of BREXIT.
- That air quality concerns (diesel particulates) around the Port of Dover generated by queuing traffic were being looked into by the Council.

The representatives present from the Town Councils indicated their willingness to work with the Council in respect of BREXIT preparations.

The Committee recognised the efforts made by the Council in respect of BREXIT preparations and acknowledged that some things were beyond the Council's control.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, thanked everyone present for attending and their contributions to the discussion.

RESOLVED: That the Committee maintain a watching brief on the issue of BREXIT.

The meeting ended at 7.38 pm.