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Minutes of the meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Monday, 11 November 2019 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor L A Keen

Councillors: D G Beaney
P M Brivio (as substitute for Councillor S H Beer)
J Rose
M Rose
C A Vinson
R S Walkden
C D Zosseder

Also Present: Councillor P D Jull
Chief Executive (East Kent Housing)

Officers: Strategic Director (Operations and Commercial)
Strategic Delivery Manager (Infrastructure)
Head of Inward Investment and Tourism
Head of Regulatory Services
Strategic Tourism Manager
Waste Services Manager
Climate Change and Energy Conservation Officer
Democratic Services Manager
Democratic Services Officer

44 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S H Beer.

45 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, Councillor P M Brivio had been appointed as substitute member for Councillor S H Beer.

46 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

47 VARIATION TO ORDER OF AGENDA

The Chairman, with the support of the meeting, agreed to vary the agenda order to take Agenda Item 14 (Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy) next in proceedings.

48 TOURISM AND VISITOR ECONOMY STRATEGY

The Head of Inward Investment and Tourism introduced the Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy.

Members were advised that economic development, tourism, inward investment and the visitor economy were considered a central component of Dover District Council's work and over the last year the Council had invested in tourism and the visitor economy. The Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy aimed to compliment,

support and influence Dover District Council's wider strategies, policies and planning decisions; including the emerging Corporate Plan and Local Plan. It also aimed to raise current and future aspirations and opportunities on the national stage. The Strategy had been approved for consultation by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 4 November 2019 with an expected launch date in the spring.

The Head of Inward Investment and Tourism highlighted the importance of investment interest in the district and the opportunities for regeneration that came with it. As part of this there was a need to ensure that the skills base of the district was developed sufficiently to provide for the new employment opportunities that would come with new investment.

The Portfolio Holder for Community and Tourism stated that the Strategy represented a significant shift in the focus of the district and was an ambitious plan to promote the district at a national and international level. The district also had an opportunity as a result of the 149th Open Golf Championship and BREXIT to capitalise on national and international media attention.

Councillor C A Vinson welcomed the Strategy and asked what growth numbers would be considered a success. In response the Strategic Tourism Manager advised that the 'Cambridge Model' would be used to monitor the amount of tourism spend annually and its translation to jobs and economic activity. The focus for the first year would be additional investment in the hotel and hospitality sector.

In response to a question concerning how the Strategy would seek to improve the satisfaction scores for Dover in comparison to Deal and Sandwich, the Head of Inward Investment and Tourism advised that this was partly due to the welcome in Dover not being as good with many attractions closed during the shoulder season which impacted on cruise passengers arriving in the town and there were improvements, such as to the Market Square area, that would help with 'place making'.

Members discussed the importance of the heritage agenda, particularly in respect of Dover, and the need to ensure all heritage assets were properly utilised.

Councillor M Rose pointed out that Shakespeare Beach needed to be cleaned up so it could be better used and Councillor L A Keen requested that Aylesham be recognized as part of this Strategy.

RESOLVED: That it be recommended to Cabinet that it be congratulated on the Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy and that the report recommendations be endorsed subject to:

- (a) The addition of numerical based targets; and
- (b) That plans be developed to increase the level of satisfaction for visitors to Dover in line with that of visitors to Sandwich and Deal.

49 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

50 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 4 November 2019 were noted.

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

The Democratic Services Manager advised that a Motion had been referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by the full Council at its meeting held on 30 October 2019 as followed:

“We note that there are 8 million people in this country who have trouble putting food on the table according to the UN. Over 500,000 people used Foodbanks in the UK last year.

The Trussell Trust alone distributed over 1.3m three-day emergency food supplies of people in crisis in the financial year 2017/18. Three million children are at risk of hunger during the school holidays and around 10% of the NHS Budget goes on treating diabetes and up to 1 million people live in food deserts in the UK.

We further note that the Government’s commitment to the UN’s 17 Sustainable Development Goals which apply internationally and domestically commits governments to ending hunger by 2030.

We resolve to ask Scrutiny to investigate the extent of the issue in the Dover District and what can be done to tackle it.”

The Democratic Services Manager advised that a scoping report would be developed in the event that the Committee accepted the referral from the full Council. This would be reported to a future meeting for consideration by Members prior to undertaking the review.

It was moved by Councillor C D Zosseder, duly seconded by Councillor P M Brivio, that the Motion be accepted.

RESOLVED: (a) That the Motion referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by the full Council at its meeting held on 30 October 2019 be accepted and included within the Work Programme.

(b) That the Democratic Services Manager be requested to develop a scoping report for the review and it be submitted to a future meeting of the committee.

52 NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING KEY DECISIONS

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

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

- Item 28 (Coastal Communities Fund grant for rejuvenation of Market Square, Dover)

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

- (b) That the item 28 (Coastal Communities Fund grant for rejuvenation of Market Square, Dover) identified above be included within the work programme.

53 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Democratic 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:

- Review of Dover District Leisure Centre - review of performance against targets and public transport access provision
- Overview of Procurement Policy
- Noise nuisance policy and performance with particular respect to the out of hours service

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

- (a) Review of Dover District Leisure Centre
- (b) Overview of Procurement Policy
- (c) Noise nuisance policy and performance with particular respect to the out of hours service

54 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.

55 EAST KENT HOUSING UPDATE

The Chief Executive (East Kent Housing) presented the Compliance Report for East Kent Housing to the Committee.

The compliance report covered both communal blocks and domestic properties and reported the following levels of compliance:

Communal Properties

- Gas – 100.00%
- Asbestos – 45.66%
- Passenger Lifts – 100.00%
- Fire Risk Assessment – 100.00%
- Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) – 35.29%
- Fire Alarms – 100.00%
- Legionella Risk Assessments – 100.00%
- Emergency Lighting – 100.00%

In respect of Fire Risk Assessments (FRA) and Water Hygiene Actions (WHA) the number of outstanding options were unchanged from the previous report. A

programme of works was now in place for the substantial FRAs and the high risk WHAs would be completed by the end of December.

The Chief Executive (East Kent Housing) advised that although the new contractor for dealing with gas was off to a good start it was not yet fully staffed and was still in the process of recruiting additional gas engineers.

The asbestos works were being undertaken through a planned programme and the work was forecast to be completed in March 2020. In the interim a 'no touch' policy was in place where no asbestos survey was held.

There was no contract in place for EICRs and this was being contracted by Dover District Council.

Councillor H M Williams raised concerns over a block of flats where there had been no working fire alarm in place since November 2018 and there was no emergency lighting. The Chief Executive (East Kent Housing) advised that she was aware of the block and that there were challenging issues of anti-social behavior that needed to be managed and in the interim a number of steps were being taken. It was agreed that an update would be given to the next meeting of the Committee on the progress in relation to this block.

Domestic Properties

- Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) – 66.06%
- Gas – 100.00%
- Smoke Detectors – 88.75%
- Asbestos – 29.44%

Councillor M Rose queried why defective smoke detectors were not being replaced in domestic properties at the time of their assessment and the Chief Executive (East Kent Housing) agreed to look into the matters and respond to Members before the next meeting.

- RESOLVED:
- (a) That the update be noted.
 - (b) That East Kent Housing advise the Committee, via the Democratic Services Manager, when the contract for EICRs works was in place.
 - (c) That East Kent Housing advise the Committee, via the Democratic Services Manager, why non-compliant smoke alarms in residential accommodation weren't being replaced at the time of assessment.
 - (d) That East Kent Housing update the Committee at its next meeting on 9 December 2019 on any necessary fire protection measures that are needed at the residential block identified by Councillor H M Williams.

The Waste Services Manager presented the report on Dover District Council Waste and Recycling Rates.

Members were advised that over 10 years ago the four East Kent Districts (Dover, Canterbury, Folkestone & Hythe and Thanet) formed a partnership with Kent County Council with the objective of delivering a consistent collection scheme across the East Kent districts which not only delivered savings but streamlined the four diverse recycling and waste collection methods that existed at that time. This was built on further in 2011 when an enhanced recycling and waste collection scheme was introduced across the Dover district. This enabled residents to recycle a wide range of materials at the kerbside and for the elements of household waste that could not be recycled, a fortnightly collection of residual waste was implemented. The Council's current waste contract with Veolia ran until January 2021.

The blue recycling bins would accept the following items for recycling:

- Food and drinks cans
- Glass bottles and jars
- Plastic bottles
- Plastic pots, tubs and trays (from the kitchen or bathroom)
- Beverage cartons i.e. Tetrapak
- Kitchen foil and metal food trays
- Empty aerosol cans

The new scheme saw recycling rates rise from 31.9% in 2010/11 to 47% in 2018/9. In comparison with other Kent authorities, Dover District Council had the 5th best performance on recycling levels in 2018/19 and was recycling at a higher percentage than the local authority average in England.

In terms of kilograms of waste produced per household per annum, Dover District Council saw levels generated fall from 532.19kgs per household per annum to 354.4kgs per household per annum. This was the best performance in Kent.

The Council was working with residents to reduce waste contamination (food waste within residential waste collections) and had run a number of events to promote recycling.

Members welcomed the efforts made to improve the district's recycling levels and the outreach work conducted with local residents.

In response to a question from Councillor C A Vinson, the Waste Services Manager advised that she would find out details of where the Council's waste was exported to and if it was recycled after export.

In response to a question from Councillor L A Keen, the Head of Regulatory Services advised that she would provide a report to the next meeting on the impact on fly tipping as a result of Kent County Council introducing new charges for some waste types and changing the hours of opening of local municipal waste sites.

RESOLVED: That officers be congratulated on the report provided and the work undertaken by the waste service.

Members were advised that there were 2 red performance indicators as followed:

- EKHC3 (Former tenant arrears as a percentage of annual debit)
- HOU010a (Number of households living in Temporary Accommodation including B&B)

Councillor C D Zosseder requested clarification in respect of HOU012 (the number of children in B&B and nightly paid) as to how many children were in B&B accommodation. It was agreed that clarification would be provided between meetings.

Councillor L A Keen congratulated the planning department on the improvements in its performance and requested that the narrative include reference to any government targets.

In respect of performance indicator WAS003 (Number of collections missed per 100,000 collections of household waste) the Waste Services Manager agreed to update Members on the reasons behind the changes in performance between Quarter 1 and Quarter 2.

In addition, for the East Kent Housing performance indicators the following were 'off-target':

- IMP13 EKH/DDC (Non-UC Arrears as % of projected annual rental income)
- IMP15 EKH/DDC (Garage arrears as a % of the projected annual rental income)
- IMP16 EKH/DDC (Percentage of RWO charges raised YTD)
- GAS04 EKH/DDC (Percentage of tenants satisfied with the most recent heating repair)
- VOID002 EKH/DDC (Average days to re-let all properties including major works)

In response to concerns raised over the amber performance indicator EKHL1 (Average time taken to relet council dwellings) the Chief Executive (East Kent Housing) advised that the performance was due to the poor condition that voids were received in.

Members discussed the continued underspend in the EKH Capital Programme (IMP05 Q2 – 10.73%) which was looking unlikely to achieve its year end target and was projecting as even worse performance than the previous year. It was agreed that a report should be submitted to the next meeting detailing what the capital programme had been spent on so far this year and the reasons as to why there was a consistent underspend.

The Chairman requested that in addition a report be submitted to the next meeting providing an explanation as to the reasons behind the performance of IMP15 EKH/DDC (Garage arrears as a % of the projected annual rental income).

RESOLVED: (a) That the Performance Report Quarter 2 2019/20 be noted.

- (b) That East Kent Housing be requested to submit a report to the next meeting of the Committee on the underspend in the Capital Programme for 2019/20.
- (c) That East Kent Housing be requested to submit a report to the next meeting providing an explanation as to the reasons behind the performance of IMP15 EKH/DDC (Garage arrears as a % of the projected annual rental income).
- (d) That clarification be provided to the Committee as to the number of children in B&B accommodation (HOU012) before the next meeting.
- (e) That the Committee be provided with an explanation for the changes in performance between Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 for performance indicator WAS003 (Number of collections missed per 100,000 collections of household waste) before the next meeting.

58 'NO-USE EMPTY' PROPERTY INITIATIVE TOP-UP LOAN AGREEMENT

The Head of Regulatory Services and the Housing Improvement Officer presented the report on the 'No use empty' property initiative.

The Council had worked in partnership with KCC to deliver its No Use Empty (NUE) Home scheme which provided interest free loans limited up to a maximum of £25,000 per unit to bring empty properties back into use.

The Cabinet on 3 July 2017 approved a revised Housing Assistance Policy which included an element relating to Empty Homes in form of an additional 'top up' loan of £15,000 per unit for owners who obtained a Kent County Council ('KCC') No Use Empty loan. The budget initially allocated for the 'top up' loan scheme was £300,000. However, due to the success of the scheme a recommendation to further increase the funding by a further £300,00 (for a total of £600,000) was made to the Cabinet.

In response to a question, Members were advised that the scheme had been particularly targeted at Dover. The scheme was unrelated to the enforcement work being conducted under s.215 notices.

The Chairman welcomed the success of the scheme.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet Decision CAB81 be endorsed as followed:

- (a) That the existing commitment of £300,000 for top-up loans under Kent County Council's 'No Use Empty' scheme be supplemented by a further £300,000 to bring the total availability up to £600,000.
- (b) That the Head of Regulatory Services be authorised, in consultation with the Solicitor to the Council, to sign an agreement with Kent County Council allowing it to continue to administer the funding on behalf of Dover District Council.

- (c) That all monies received from the repayment of loans be used for further top-up loans under Kent County Council's 'No Use Empty' property initiative.

59 CLIMATE CHANGE EMERGENCY

The Strategic Director (Operations and Commercial) presented the report on the Climate Change Emergency.

This report provided an overview of the wider context of the Climate Change Emergency whilst responding to the Council request for a report setting out the measures required to make the Council's activities carbon neutral and the actions that would need to be taken to make the District as a whole carbon neutral.

In addition to the Local Government Association declaring a Climate Emergency at its meeting held in July 2019, over half of local authorities in the UK have also declared a Climate Emergency at a local level.

The Council would be focusing its activities in three areas:

- Raising awareness;
- Reducing emissions from our own activities; and
- Developing plans to reduce emissions across the District.

This would allow the Council to identify what was achievable and what was not and how it would achieve its goal of being a net zero carbon emitter by 2030.

In response to a question as to why the Council was setting itself a net zero carbon emitter target of 2030 while setting the same target for the district as 2050, the Strategic Director (Operations and Commercial) advised that there were a number of factors beyond the Council's direct control in the district (such as the Port of Dover's air quality) that it would need to try and influence whereas the Council's own emissions were in its direct control. The Council could also encourage other organisations through achieving its 2030 target.

Councillor C D Zosseder suggested that the Climate Change Working Group could be increased from 1 to 2 representatives from each of the political groups on the Council.

Councillor L A Keen suggested that the Working Group should give consideration to the involvement of young people via engagement activities or even membership of the working group. The Strategic Director (Operations and Commercial) advised that the Cabinet had been impressed with the question asked by Hamish Napier at full Council and were keen to involve young people in some way.

It was moved by Councillor J Rose, duly seconded by Councillor C D Zosseder and

RESOLVED: That it be recommended to the Cabinet:

- (a) That the report be endorsed.
- (b) That the start times of the Working Group be set at 6.00pm in line with other committees.
- (c) That the number of representatives from each political group on the Working Group be increased from 1 to 2 members.

60 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was moved by Councillor C D Zosseder, duly seconded by Councillor P M Brivio 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 paragraphs 3 and 5 Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

61 BUS RAPID TRANSIT PROJECT UPDATE

The Strategic Delivery Manager (Infrastructure) presented the update on the Bus Rapid Transit Project.

RESOLVED: That it be recommended to the Cabinet that the Strategic Director (Operations and Commercial) be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Licensing, to explore options regarding Compulsory Purchase Orders to secure the land necessary to deliver the project.

The meeting ended at 8.03 pm.