

Medway Council
Meeting of Regeneration, Community and Culture
Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 31 January 2013

6.30pm to 10.15pm

Record of the meeting

Subject to approval as an accurate record at the next meeting of this committee

Present: Councillors Bright (Chairman), Etheridge, Griffin, Griffiths, Adrian Gulvin, Harriott, Hicks, Hubbard, Juby, Mackinlay, Maisey, Stamp and Turpin

In Attendance: Steve Bell, FCC, for agenda item 6
Councillor Isaac Igwe
Councillor Mike O'Brien, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Customer Contact
Marc Blowers, Head of Housing Management
Robin Cooper, Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture
Sarah Dagwell, Head of Waste Services
Tim England, Head of Safer Communities
Stephen Gaimster, Assistant Director Housing, Development and Transport
Barbara Graham, Legal Advisor
Mick Hayward, Chief Finance Officer
Richard Hicks, Assistant Director, Customer First, Leisure, Culture, Democracy and Governance
Perry Holmes, Monitoring Officer
Brian McCutcheon, Planning Policy and Design Manager
Andy McGrath, Assistant Director, Front Line Services
Caroline Salisbury, Democratic Services Officer
Melanie Tong, Veolia, for agenda item 6

792 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting held on 13 December 2012 was agreed and signed as correct by the Chairman.

793 Apologies for absence

There were none.

794 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

**Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee
31 January 2013**

795 Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

796 Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Customer Contact in attendance

Discussion:

The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Customer Contact had given information in a report about achievements within his portfolio during the past year and the committee asked him questions about these, which included:

- Environmental health checks on food, following the recent national publicity about horsemeat found in beef burgers.

Councillor O'Brien advised that food safety was taken very seriously but he could not comment on the current situation about horsemeat. The Local Authority carried out all the relevant checks within Medway, which were at the end of the food chain but the national problems had been at the start of the food chain. The environmental health team had recently undergone a food safety health check, which it had passed with flying colours.

The council was also due to launch a Hygiene Registration Scheme, where food venues such as restaurants would be judged on hygiene, content and environmental standards and given a mark of excellence, if appropriate.

- A recent re-structure in the police force had resulted in changes to personnel working at ward-level, which had not been communicated to Councillors.

The Portfolio Holder confirmed that there had been a re-structure in the police force including Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and the new structure was now in place. He would ask the police to notify Councillors of the names and contact numbers for the officers working within each ward.

- Could the CCTV system be developed further to include other Local Authorities.

The Portfolio Holder advised that the CCTV Partnership had worked together to create a system that worked for all the Local Authorities involved in the partnership. Staff had re-located from the other councils to work in Medway to operate the enhanced coverage, with better quality equipment, which also created financial savings for all the authorities.

Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee 31 January 2013

- Were all CCTV cameras operational, as some cameras in Chatham were rumoured not to work whilst others had poor resolution

Councillor O'Brien advised that the old analogue CCTV system was prone to breaking but the advantage of the new contract was that all cameras were being updated to digital. This project was currently on going. He was unaware of any problems with the current cameras but would look into this.

- Environmental enforcement, particularly for litter, was a high priority in town centres but could this be enforced in urban areas, especially school routes.

The Portfolio Holder informed Members that the Community Safety team was currently being consulted about plans to split the engagement side from the enforcement function into two very different roles, which would result in a dedicated enforcement team with strong targets to reach. The engagement officers would change their shift pattern so that they would be more visible on the streets.

There was also an on-going education programme to encourage people to be proud of the area they lived in but the team could look at occasional visits to urban areas. PCSO's were working with secondary schools as this was an on-going problem they were trying to tackle.

- A Member raised concerns with the reporting and enforcement of dog fouling, which was borne out in the Portfolio Holder's report, as it stated there had been no enforcement action in this area during the past year. He had contacted a Community Safety officer, who had advised that the waste services team would not clear up any fouling outside of the normal cleansing schedule, which could mean that it remained there for up to two weeks. Members and Community Safety officers had both asked for signage about dog fouling to be put up in Beechings Way but were told there was no budget for this, so Ward Members were considering paying for this from their ward budgets.

Councillor O'Brien responded by advising that Beechings Way had dog litterbins along the route and the council gave away 100,000 'dog bags' for owners to use and place in the bins across Medway. The reality of prosecuting a dog owner for allowing their dog to foul and not clear it up afterwards was very difficult, as the dogs had to be seen doing it.

The member stated that his main concern was that when a council officer reported this problem and asked the waste services team to clean it up, they were told this would only happen when the regular street cleansing service took place and there were communication problems between the two teams. Other Members agreed that dog fouling had become more of an issue during the past six months and one Members advised that the largest number of complaints he received was about this matter.

Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee 31 January 2013

Councillor O'Brien advised that one officer was working on a programme about this issue and had made a film to try and get the message over that was available on Youtube. He could not explain why there was a particular problem over the past six months but assured the committee that officers would continue with their campaign and continue to look to enforce against this.

- Did the council or the DVLA have responsibility for untaxed vehicles.

The Portfolio Holder advised that the council dealt with untaxed parked vehicles and the police dealt with those that were being driven. There had been a relaxation in the law recently which meant that the council could not remove the vehicle until it had been untaxed for two months.

- A Member asked for information on the Prison Service and how it helped the council.

Councillor O'Brien advised that the Prison Service, together with the Probation Service, ran a 'Community Payback Scheme' in order to help prisoners and ex-prisoners re-integrate back into society by performing works around Medway. If Councillors had any request for the use of this service they should contact officers.

- Would the proposed restructure of the Community Safety service have an impact on service delivery.

The Portfolio Holder advised that if the proposals in the consultation went ahead and there were changes to the current shift pattern, there would be more officers available in the day and people would see them more often. There would always be an officer for Councillors to contact and also the use of the 'Love Medway' App.

A Member responded by asking what duties would not be covered in the future, during the times when officers were working under the current shift pattern.

Councillor O'Brien stated that some officers currently started their shift at 5am in order to open up the parks, which was not the best use of their time and he was currently considering the alternatives, so that Community Safety officers were working appropriate to their duties. Members advised that they would be concerned if this resulted in parks (especially those located close to residential areas) remained open until late, or throughout the night, as residents would then probably suffer from anti-social behaviour and noise disturbance from the park. Councillor O'Brien advised that he had two options to consider and he had not yet decided which one to implement.

Decision:

The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Customer Contact was thanked for attending the meeting.

797 Annual review of waste contracts: year 2

Decision:

The representatives from Veolia (Melanie Tong) and FCC (Steve Bell and Neil Jones) gave presentations and answered questions on the work carried out within the past year, which included:

Veolia

- The council's bid for DCLG funding
- Introduction of a weekly recycling collection but overall there had been a reduction in the total tonnage collected for the year due to issues with the implementation of the scheme
- Weekly garden and food waste collection, with an increase in the total tonnage collected
- Launch of a WEEE (waste electrical and electronic equipment) kerbside collection
- Separation of waste and recyclable materials - plastic, cans and glass picked up by the manual street cleansing staff
- Litter and detritus clearance were both above target, as was public satisfaction with refuse collection at an average of 92.75% (target of 90%)
- Veolia was a very large employer nationally and provided local employment opportunities which last year in Medway included 12 apprenticeships and two NEETs (young people who were not in education, or employment or on a training scheme)
- 89 staff had given at least half a day's voluntary service to a variety of projects in Medway.

FCC

- FCC managed 220 licensed waste management facilities in the UK and 120 waste contracts for 60 Local Authorities, handling over 9 million tonnes of municipal, commercial and industrial waste per year
- 20,839 tonnes of materials were brought to the Medway Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) in 2011/2012 and of this 12,875 tonnes were recycled
- During 2011/2012 the Environment Agency had inspected all three sites and no breaches were found at any of the sites
- During 2011/2012 there were no RIDDOR (health and safety) reportable incidents at any of Medway's HWRC's
- Recycling rates had risen from 52% in 2010/2011 to over 61% in 2011/2012
- Customer satisfaction levels were greater than 97%
- A new re-use service had begun in partnership with a local reuse charity, Abacus, which was hoped could be developed further

**Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee
31 January 2013**

- FCC recognised that the council had to make savings and proposed to meet this challenge by:
 - increasing recycling rates which would result in reduced disposal costs
 - the development of a Trade Waste Service at one or more of the HWRC's. The provision of such a service would help support local businesses and generate revenue
- Plans to enhance the existing service include:
 - re-development of the Hoath Way HWRC
 - reduced trade waste abuse at the sites through the development of the Trade Waste Service. This would result in a reduction of disposal costs for the council
 - continued site layout improvements to encourage recycling activities and increased diversion of waste from landfill
 - continued training of staff in relation to customer services
 - undertaking six-monthly customer satisfaction surveys
 - incentivisation of staff to encourage high quality customer service standards
 - development of new opportunities to recycle materials, for example carpets.

The committee asked various questions, which included:

- The apprenticeship scheme that Veolia ran for young people who were not in education, or employment or on a training scheme (NEET).

Members were advised that two young people had successfully completed the programme and they had been recruited as apprenticeships. Young people who were identified by the council as being NEET often displayed challenging behaviour and were assigned a mentor while working at Veolia. This meant they had a minimum of a weekly meeting with a report sheet.

- Consideration of the fuel used by the Veolia fleet of vehicles due to their effect on the environment.

Veolia continually reviewed the fuels used by its vehicles which had included bio-fuel, liquid petroleum gas (LPG) and even algae. It was a big issue for the company, especially where it had an aging fleet of vehicles. New vehicles were much more efficient and it was hoped that new vehicles would soon be operational in Medway, as this had been included in the recent DCLG bid.

- Could parked vehicles be moved to allow access for street cleaners to the edge of the road/pavement.

Cars and other vehicles often parked half way on the pavement and half way on the road, which caused great difficulties for the street cleaning teams but Veolia had no power to move any vehicle.

Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee 31 January 2013

- What happened to dead animals collected from the roads

Veolia had a microchip-reading machine and all domestic animals were checked to see if they had a microchip and the owners were contacted.

- Why was it possible to take plasterboard to some of the household waste recycling centres (HWRC) but not the site located at Hoath Way.

Officers advised that there was currently limited space at the Hoath Way site but when this was re-developed the facilities provided there would be re-considered, which could include plasterboard.

- Quality of service provided by HWRC staff

The committee commented on the very high quality service provided by the HWRC staff and asked that the committee's recognition and thanks was passed on to the staff.

- Height of platforms in front of waste containers.

A Member asked that the height of the raised platform in front of each recycling container was looked at, as it was still difficult for elderly people to raise items up to the edge of the container.

- At Capstone HWRC there was a conflict of people walking along the road to get to the recycling container for fluorescent lighting tubes beside the traffic going into the Capstone HWRC and there was concern that an accident would happen there. Also, that there was a large, deep puddle for pedestrians to negotiate in that area of the site after rainfall.

The representatives from FCC agreed to look at this and report back to the Head of Waste Services on this matter.

- Members were encouraged that FCC was considering setting up a small area for trade waste goods to be recycled, especially at a time when Kent County Council was restricting access to some of its sites. However, the price to be set for this service was very important and not to be set too high, as this would only increase flytipping.

Decision:

The representatives from the waste contractors Veolia and FCC were thanked for their presentations and the answers they had provided to Member's questions.

798 Member's Item: Darnley Arches, Strood

Discussion:

Councillor Igwe was invited to address the committee as he had submitted the Member's Item for consideration. He voiced his concern that not all of the questions he had raised had been answered in the report, for example there was no mention of the date when the council became aware it could not meet the original agreement, there was no indication in which year the £153,836 had been spent and no timescale for the future proposals.

The Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture advised that the council had found out in October 2012 that Network Rail could not build the pedestrian subway due to the poor state of repair of the railway bridge and the council had only three months to arrange the relevant road closures to allow Network Rail to carry out the necessary urgent repair works. The monies received from Morrisons had been spent on studies carried out with regard to the construction of the subway and a feasibility study carried out in 2012 for pedestrian improvements to be made before 2014. The council had issued joint statements with Network Rail to residents, traders and Ward Councillors regarding the road closure relating to the Network Rail bridge replacement.

A Member advised that Councillors representing the Strood area had been invited to a meeting with the Head of Capital Projects, Road Safety and Networks in the summer of 2012, where they were informed that Network Rail wished to replace the bridge at Darnley Arches and that this would be an opportunity for pedestrian improvements in that area.

The Member laid out the history of the planning application in 1998 and why the S106 monies had been requested as part of that application, following which a design for improvements was produced by an engineering contractor in 2006. In his opinion, since that time, the council had failed to be proactive about the improvements and had failed to pursue them once the monies had been received. The only thing that had happened since 2006 was that a recent survey of the bridge had shown it to be in a much worse state of repair than previously thought and Network Rail had brought forward their plans for repair due to health and safety concerns. Prior to this, the council had the opportunity during the previous six years to have plans in place in order to implement them when necessary and had missed this opportunity as the plans were not in place.

A Member added that he also thought this was a missed opportunity and asked why the matter had not been sufficiently escalated with Network Rail early enough to ensure it was embedded in their bridge re-structure works. He also asked what could be learnt from this and were the proposals in 2006 now outdated which meant that the proposal for a pedestrian subway should warrant re-investigation. He did not believe subways to be popular with the public, as they were being closed elsewhere in Medway and therefore it would not be money well spent. He also voiced concern that 20% of the monies allocated for these works had been spent on plans and designs with little to show for them.

**Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee
31 January 2013**

Other Members of the committee added that they also had concern over the amount of money spent on design work and whether the council had received value for money. They also asked what guarantee officers could give that the work would be completed by August 2014, as there would be an implication on the budget if it was not, as the money would have to be paid back to Morrisons. They also asked who authorised the spend of £153,000, what did the council receive for this money and what were the ideas produced from this study.

The Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture advised that in 2006 the plan was to build a pedestrian subway and a building had previously been bought at the location which would be demolished to make way for the entrance of the subway. Under the terms of a S106 agreement relating to the former Alloy Wheels site, additional land had been provided to the council to use as an alternative entrance to the subway. When the council knew Network Rail was intending to replace the rail bridge, it raised with Network Rail the potential to widen the bridge to improve pedestrian access. These negotiations were going well until the completed survey showed the bridge to be in a much worse state of repair than previously anticipated. Network Rail then advised the council that it needed to replace the bridge without delay and ended negotiations about pedestrian improvements, due to health and safety concerns. Unfortunately there was not time to design and include pedestrian improvements to be included in Network Rail's works.

The Director agreed that this had been a missed opportunity but this was not due to the working relationship having broken down. It was simply that Network Rail had to act very quickly, and there was no time to design suitable pedestrian improvements to be incorporated into Network Rail's repair schedule. He advised that he would send Members a breakdown of the costs in a Briefing Note but that officers already had a provisional estimate for a pedestrian subway of £1.6 million, which was more than the monies received from Morrisons. £153,000 was a lot of money but survey work and designs were often 10% of the cost for a scheme. The Assistant Director of Housing, Development and Transport was in the process of procuring a consultant to advise on the current options now available and the council would also apply for the additional funding where possible from other Department for Transport funding streams or through the Local Transport Plan. He assured Members that officers would advise the committee on how these monies would be spent.

A Member representing Strood advised that although she was also very disappointed that no improvements had been made after such a long time, there had been several opportunities for discussion about this matter and Members had received notice that there would have to be emergency works to the bridge due to technical reasons, which had been confirmed at this meeting. At a meeting with local businesses, Network Rail had listened to traders concerns and taken onboard a number of issues about the bridge. At no point during these consultations did Network Rail advise that they were not going ahead with pedestrian improvements.

**Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee
31 January 2013**

The Assistant Director of Front Line Services added that throughout most of 2012, Network Rail's plan had been to widen the carriageway under the bridge arch and install a wider pedestrian subway. The only reason this plan was not taken forward was due to technical reasons. When it had become clear that this was the case, there was a final attempt to go back to a subway solution from Northcote Road but there was not enough time remaining to achieve that.

A Member suggested that the way forward, before any further monies were spent (particularly on consultants), was to hold another consultation as the area had changed dramatically during the past seven years when the previous consultation was held and the main flow of traffic had fundamentally changed.

Councillor Igwe advised that he only wished to put the situation right and achieve the answers to the lessons learnt from this longstanding issue and to move forward with a better way to spend the money available for the benefit of people in Strood.

Decision:

The committee agreed:

- (a) to refer the matter to the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services and the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Development and Economic Growth, in consultation with the Ward Members, for further consideration with officers prior to the work outlined in paragraph 3.6 of the report;
- (b) to request a breakdown of the £153,836 spent on scoping and designing works in a Briefing Note.

799 Housing planned maintenance programme - update report

Discussion:

The Assistant Director of Legal and Corporate Services introduced the report which included a presentation setting out the procedure followed from when identifying that works were required through to their completion and payment of the contractor. He also informed the committee on how the system was double-checked throughout the process, including 10% of completed works checked by 'mystery shoppers' to ensure the work had been carried out appropriately and that the customers were satisfied.

The Members who had requested further information on this matter at the previous meeting advised that the information in this report was more meaningful and that they had held a productive meeting with the Assistant Director on this matter.

Decision:

The committee agreed to note the report and the progress made to date.

800 Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital budget 2013/2014

Discussion:

The Chief Finance Officer introduced the report that set out the council's expenditure against income which had resulted in a surplus of £1 million, together with £4 million brought forward from the previous year's balance, resulting in £5 million future investment in the current housing stock. The committee was also advised that the proposed rent increase was set to a formula produced by the government to progress rent convergence between Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords with a target date of April 2015.

The committee was further advised of the welfare reform, which would have a significant impact on rent collection as it radically changed the welfare benefits system from April 2013. The payment of Universal Credit in the future would also have a big effect, as benefits would be paid directly to the recipient and not, as at present, to the Local Authority. There was also the introduction of 'bedroom tax' for under-occupation of a property, for example tenants under-occupying a property by one bedroom would see a reduction in their housing benefit of 14%, those under-occupying by two bedrooms or more would see a reduction of their benefit by 25%. Members were informed that the council would write to all those affected, approximately 1300 residents, to advise them of these changes.

The Chief Finance Officer also informed the committee that the government had also localised Council Tax Benefit with the introduction, from 1 April 2013, of a new Council Tax Support scheme. This would have an impact on working-age benefit recipients such that they would be required to pay a contribution to their Council Tax in the order of 25%. These were likely to be the same tenants affected by the under occupation penalty and who would likely not have had to pay before. The average Council Tax demand at approximately £230 would make debt collection more difficult.

Members asked how many council-owned properties had not yet reached the government's policy of rent convergence between Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords and were advised that approximately 230 properties were not yet at that point.

The committee voiced its concern at the probable increase in rent arrears once the 'bedroom tax' and Universal Credit came into force and asked what measures were in place to overcome this. The Head of Housing Management advised that since October 2012 tenants were able to pay their rent by direct debit and officers would continue to encourage tenants to use this method to pay their rent. There was also a team of dedicated staff to advise tenants on welfare reform and the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) was also working with officers with the potential to develop financial assessments for customers, run financial workshops and be pro-active, as many customers were unused to managing their own monies.

Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee 31 January 2013

The committee also discussed the problems facing tenants who may already have other debt, with their benefit being used to pay off the debt, rather than to pay their rent. Members discussed the possible role of Credit Unions and debt advice and were advised that (following a recommendation of the Fair Access to Credit task group review) officers had started to investigate future work with the voluntary sector and Credit Unions on this issue.

A Member questioned the rationale for a 2% or 50 year provision for the repayment of debt given that most mortgage lengths were usually 25 years. Officers advised that 2% had been the statutory requirement a few years ago but of more relevance was that the investment related to assets that had a life of 50 years.

Another Member asked whether the figures supplied in appendix one were correct and whether they were a general average or weighted average of council rents. Officers undertook to look into this and report back to the Member.

Another Member asked that the programme of re-modelling and improvements to sheltered housing identified to utilise the £5 million "headroom" monies would consider increasing the number of 1 bed and 2 bed sheltered accommodation available as, in the future, tenants would want to down-size in order to avoid the 'bedroom tax'. Officers advised that there would be a report to the committee later in the year with proposals for utilising the "headroom".

Decision:

The committee agreed to recommend to Cabinet:

- (a) The proposed revenue and capital budgets for 2013/2014, inclusive of an average rent increase of £2.90 per week (based upon 50 collection weeks and equating to an average increase of 3.75%);
- (b) Service charges for 2013/14 reflect the costs incurred in providing that service, where possible, and that where costs are not fully recovered, the uplift is such that costs can be fully recovered by 2014/15, (excepting the Wardens Service Charge as set out in 4.2), using above inflation increases to do so as per Appendix B to this report. The average increase will be 5% or £0.38;
- (c) Officers to develop proposals for utilising headroom with the intention to submit a further report later in the year;
- (d) To approve the repayment of debt based on a minimum revenue payment of 2% on outstanding debt.

801 Planning Policy - urban development

Discussion:

Councillor Adrian Gulvin was invited to introduce the report, as he had requested that this matter for consideration. He advised that the council had strong planning policies to protect unwanted development in rural areas but in urban areas there was not such a high level of protection. He stated that if the council did not have strong policies, the chances of defending a decision at appeal was very difficult. He proposed that officers set up workshops with Councillors and officers (including officers in health and children's departments, together with the Youth Parliament) to look at how the current policies could be improved, so that once the Core Strategy was in place, this would give the opportunity to add other policies to it.

Other Members supported the approach that workshops should be programmed when appropriate into the planning policy timetable, once the Core Strategy had been finalised.

The Planning Policy and Design Manager stated that it would be a positive step to involve Members in a range of workshops. He did not think the council had a weakness in this type of policy for urban development but at the next stage of the timetable there would be an opportunity to look at this issue. Officers had recently met about health and obesity problems and how to link measures into planning, licensing and other policies. As an interim measure, he hoped to produce an informal paper to discuss this with Members. However, it was critical that the Core Strategy reached a conclusion and when that had happened, officers could immediately begin work to arrange some workshops.

Decision:

The committee agreed to note the report and asked for workshops to be convened, once the Core Strategy had been adopted.

802 Cultural activities programme

Discussion:

The Assistant Director, Customer First, Leisure, Culture, Democracy and Governance gave a presentation, which included the priorities set out in the Cultural Strategy, the 2012 Year of Celebration, Olympic and other sporting events held in Medway, the Diamond Jubilee River Festival and the current 'Enjoy Medway' campaign.

Members asked that officers consider the inclusion of the 350th anniversary of the dutch raid on the Medway (second Anglo-Dutch War 1665-1667) into forthcoming events for 2017, as the 300th anniversary had been a large and successful event in 1967 and it seemed appropriate and achievable for 2017, alongside the emerging annual River Festival and the improvements to Upnor

Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee 31 January 2013

Castle. The Netherlands Maritime Museum housed artefacts from that period and a request could be made to the museum to loan some items for this event.

A Member advised that, in his opinion, the two theatres had held very high quality productions over the past few years but that they had not always been fully attended. He asked officers to consider the options available to fill the empty seats, such as offering university students a seat for £1 at one day's notice. This also had the possibility of expanding the future audience.

Another Member asked whether it was time to consider the future of the two theatres in Chatham and how the promotion of the programmes on offer could be improved to attract more people to attend them. Members raised the difficulty of the small entrance to the Central Theatre and access to the bar area which could deter customers and queried the possibility of purchasing the neighbouring shop to increase the frontage of the building.

Decision:

The committee endorsed the presentation and report and asked for a review of the Cultural Activities programme to be submitted on an annual basis.

803 Work Programme

Discussion:

The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report and advised the committee that the Housing Scrutiny Panel, which was due to be held to account at the next meeting, had recently disbanded and therefore this item would be removed from the work programme. If the panel re-formed, this would be added to the work programme when appropriate. She also reminded Members to forward any ideas for future in-depth topics for 2013/2014 to the Chairman or Spokespersons before they met to discuss this at the end of February 2013.

A Councillor raised the issue of the road network in Chatham and how, in his opinion, it did not flow properly with two major 'pinch points' which made journeys through Chatham town centre difficult. He acknowledged that the Chairman had offered to consider this matter as part of the 'De-cluttering Town Centres' task group review but that it was an issue to be looked at in its own right and he therefore requested a Members Item report on this as soon as possible.

Another Member stated that the Council Plan also included six major routes into Chatham as one of its targets, which were not performing well and should also be looked at. Officers suggested that these two matters could be combined and put forward as a possible topic for an in-depth review for 2013/2014, which was due to be considered by the Chairman and Spokespersons of the committee next month.

Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee
31 January 2013

Decision:

The committee agreed to:

- (a) note the report;
- (b) add a Member's Item report on traffic flow in Chatham town centre to the work programme as soon as possible and that this is not included as part of the in-depth review into 'De-cluttering Town Centres'.

Chairman

Date:

Caroline Salisbury, Democratic Services Officer

Telephone: 01634 332013

Email: democratic.services@medway.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank