

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

Thursday, 12 December 2013

6.30pm to 10.00pm

Record of the meeting

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

- Present:** Councillors: Carr (Chairman), Bright, Clarke, Griffiths, Adrian Gulvin (Vice-Chairman), Juby, Mackinlay, Hubbard, Turpin and Stamp
- Substitutes:** Councillors:
Mrs Diane Chambers (Substitute for Etheridge)
Mackness (Substitute for Mason)
Shaw (Substitute for Osborne)
- In Attendance:** Joanne Cable, Chatham World Heritage Manager
Robin Cooper, Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture
Councillor Howard Doe, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services
Tim England, Head of Safer Communities
Stephen Gaimster, Assistant Director, Housing and Regeneration
Mick Hayward, Chief Finance Officer
Andy McGrath, Assistant Director, Front Line Services
Steve Hewlett, Integrated Transport Manager
Richard Hicks, Deputy Director, Customer Contact, Leisure, Culture, Democracy and Governance
Perry Holmes, Assistant Director Legal and Corporate Services/Monitoring Officer
Mark Johnson, Principal Transport Planner
Ellen Wright, Democratic Services Officer
Sean Bone-Knell – Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority
James Finch - Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority

634 Appointment of Chairman

Discussion:

The Committee was informed that due to his employment, Councillor Bright had resigned his position as Chairman of this Committee. The Committee was therefore requested to appoint a new Chairman for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

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Decision:

Councillor Carr was elected Chairman for the Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

635 Chairman's announcements

At the commencement of the meeting, on behalf of the committee, the Chairman expressed appreciation to the outgoing Chairman, Councillor Bright for all the work that he had undertaken as Chairman of the Committee for the past 5 years. These sentiments were endorsed by other members of the committee.

In addition, the Chairman also expressed his appreciation to Daniel Kalley, Democratic Services Officer who had been clerking the Committee for the past few months but had now left the employment of the Council.

636 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting held on 3 October 2013 was agreed and signed by the Chairman as correct.

637 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Etheridge, Mason and Osborne.

638 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

639 Declarations of interests and whipping

Disclosable pecuniary interests

Referring to agenda item 11 (Update on Domestic Abuse) and on the basis that a member had referred to paragraph 4.4.1 (Schools Notification Pilot) during the debate on this item, Councillor Griffiths declared his interest and asked that it be noted that he is a Non Executive Director of Medway Community Healthcare.

During the Officer's report on agenda item 15 (Work Programme), and in the light of the additional item included in the Forward Plan on Special Educational Needs Transport Contracts, Councillor Griffiths declared his interest on the basis that his wife is employed by Danecourt School.

Other interests

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Councillor Adrian Gulvin, referred to agenda item 7 (Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority (KMFRA) - Safety Plan 2014) and advised the Committee that as a member of the KMFRA he would not be speaking on this item as a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. For the purpose of this item, Councillor Gulvin vacated his seat on the Committee and joined the Fire Authority representatives for the consideration of this item.

Councillor Mackness referring to agenda item 10 (Chatham World Heritage Planning Policy Document) sought clarification as to whether he should leave the meeting when this item is discussed on the basis that he is a resident and owns property within the proposed World Heritage Site. Perry Holmes, Monitoring Officer advised that as no decisions were being made on this matter at this meeting, it was not necessary for Councillor Mackness to leave but that his declaration would be noted in the minutes of the meeting.

In the light of the information provided to Councillor Mackness by the Monitoring Officer, both Perry Holmes and Councillor Mrs Diane Chambers also requested that it be noted in the minutes that they also resided within the proposed Chatham World Heritage Site.

Referring to agenda item 10 (Chatham World Heritage Planning Policy Document) Councillor Griffiths requested that it be noted that he is a Council representative on the Chatham Maritime Trust.

Referring to agenda item 10 (Chatham World Heritage Planning Policy Document) Councillor Mackness requested that it be noted that he is an independent member of the Chatham Maritime Trust.

640 Attendance of the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services

Discussion:

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe attended the meeting to be held to account for the areas of his portfolio that fell within the remit of this committee. Members asked questions and commented and Councillor Doe responded as follows: -

- **Plans for Medway Park in 2014** – In addition to the full programme of events that had already taken place at Medway Park in 2013 as set out in paragraph 2.1.4 of the report, for 2014 the following events were either planned or in the process of being planned:
 - British Schools National Fencing Event – March
 - National Table Tennis Grand Prix – September
 - International Trampolining Event
 - Possible follow up event to the successful Wheelchair Rugby event in 2013.

In addition, as part of the run-up to the Commonwealth Games, officers were exploring the possibility of some events being held at Medway Park.

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- **Deangate Ridge - update on works** – Works at Deangate Ridge Driving Range had now been completed and the golf course had a high level of maintenance and provision of its own water supply. The Driving Range had been improved and works were starting on building the Par 3 Academy Course.
- **Sports Development Teams working with ethnic minority groups** - It was confirmed that the Sports Development Teams worked extensively with schools and ethnic groups in Medway but if Members had knowledge of any groups that were not involved, the Portfolio Holder would welcome this information.
- **The use of Housing Revenue Account funding for the provision of a new Library and Community Hub in Strood** – The Portfolio Holder explained that when considering the issue of funding for the new Strood Library and Community Hub, it was necessary to consider the Council's finances overall and not different sections of funding in isolation. However, he accepted that the funding mechanisms of the Council were complex. He explained that in addition to the provision of library facilities, the Strood Community Hub would also provide services such as debt advice and information on housing, and that this would benefit those living in Strood and, in particular, those residing in social housing.
- **The provision of allotments and the reallocation of un-maintained allotments** – The Portfolio Holder advised that where possible, the Council provided allotments to meet demand but this was dependent upon availability. He advised that officers worked closely with the Allotment Federation to ensure that investment was targeted to allotment sites where it was most needed. In terms of allotments that were not maintained, he explained the process by which this was followed up by the Council. In some circumstances, there were justifiable reasons why an individual may not have been able to maintain their allotment, but if a response was not received from the allotment holder or, there were no justifiable reasons why the allotment was not being maintained, then the Council would look to termination of the agreement. It was also explained that tenants were also offered the opportunity to reduce the size of their allotment plot and to share the plot with another allotment holder.
- **Grounds maintenance and grass cutting** - The Portfolio Holder explained that the regularity of grass cutting was not solely determined by frequency, but on the basis of when the grass required cutting. In respect of the issue of closing roads to cut grass, it was recognised that this was an expensive exercise and one which did not receive the support of motorists. This was a matter that was in the process of being discussed with the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services as to how the number of road closures for grounds maintenance could be reduced.

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- **Armed Forces Day** – The Committee expressed their congratulations for the very successful Armed Forces Day in 2013.
- **Provision of Residents' Parking Permits at Community Hubs** – The Portfolio Holder agreed that residents should be able to obtain their residents parking permits at Community Hubs throughout Medway and not just at an office in Strood, and the Director for Regeneration, Community and Culture confirmed that this was in the process of being arranged. It would also be possible to obtain such permits on line.
- **Strood Library and Community Hub – access** – The Portfolio Holder gave an assurance that the access road into the car park for the new Strood Library and Community Hub would be improved and designated parking spaces for the library would be allocated in an adjacent public car park. The Portfolio Holder confirmed that he had not yet seen the final version of the layout of the car park and, in noting the suggestion that the car park have a circular route layout, the Portfolio Holder agreed to ask the Director for Regeneration, Community and Culture for further information on this.
- **Strood Library and Community Hub – Announcement of the proposed new location** - In response to a Member's concern that information on the location of the new Strood Library and Community Hub had been notified to the public prior to Ward Councillors, the Portfolio Holder advised that at no time had he sought to withhold information from Ward Councillors, other than that of a commercially sensitive nature.
- **Stirling Centre** – It was noted that there had been very positive feedback from users of the Stirling Centre since the operational responsibility for the Centre had been taken over by the King's School.

In response to queries on the future of the Centre, the Portfolio Holder advised of contacts the King's School had with the Lawn Tennis Association, and he hoped that this would help to raise the profile of tennis in Medway. He also confirmed that the gym facilities at the Centre had also benefited from investment, none of which had been a cost to the Council.

- **Commemoration of the Centenary of the First World War in 2014** – The Portfolio Holder advised that in conjunction with the Lord Lieutenancy, major events were planned in Kent to commemorate the Centenary of the First World War in 2014.

In Medway, in partnership with the Chatham Historic Dockyard, plans were underway for a Church Service, Parade, a march past with salute to a distinguished VIP and, if possible, a beat retreat.

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- **Target satisfaction figures** – In response to a query about whether the targets for satisfaction levels should be raised, given the very high scores currently, the Portfolio Holder explained the difficulties in comparing targets from one year to another, and that it was not unusual for satisfaction targets to increase or decrease by one or two percentage points. Provided satisfaction levels remained broadly in the same region, he considered this acceptable. He did however confirm that in 2013, the majority of satisfaction levels had increased from 2012.
- **Possible outsourcing of library services** – In response to a question as to whether the Portfolio Holder would consider outsourcing the library service as Kent County Council seem to be doing, the Portfolio Holder advised that whilst he was open to looking at new ways of delivering services, he was also aware of the need to ensure that services were maintained to a high level. He referred to the existing partnership that Medway had with volunteers working in its Libraries and advised that if a group approached the Council expressing a wish to take over running a library then he would give such request serious consideration. However, he would need to be certain that the library would continue to be operated at the same level as currently.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services for his report and his responses to questions.

641 Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority - Safety Plan 2014

Discussion:

Sean Bone-Knell, Assistant Director, Service Delivery and James Finch, Assistant Director for Policy and Performance both of the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority (KMFRA) attended the meeting to report upon the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority's Safety Plan 2014.

For the purpose of consideration of this item, Councillor Adrian Gulvin removed himself from the Committee and joined the Officers from the Fire Authority.

It was noted that the Safety Plan had been approved for public consultation on 5 November 2013 at the KMFRA Planning and Performance Committee and the consultation period now ran until 13 January 2014.

At the request of Medway Council, officers of the KMFRA had attended the Medway's Rural Liaison Committee in addition to this meeting to undertake a briefing on the Safety Plan.

Sean Bone-Knell outlined the following changes that had taken place for the KMFRA since 2012 as follows:

- Reduced demand on the emergency response service despite response times to life threatening calls remaining static.

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- Investment in new fire stations, including the redevelopment of Watling Fire Station in Gillingham and the provision of a new fire station in Rochester.
- Investment in new equipment.
- The recruitment of more on-call firefighters.
- The reduction in call outs to false alarms.

In addition he outlined proposed changes due to take effect over the next three years including:

- Changes to the duty systems for firefighters.
- Proposals for 24/7 fire stations.
- Proposals for day crewed fire stations.
- Proposals for on-call fire stations.
- Reducing the number of height vehicles in the vehicle fleet.
- Reviewing the fleet of fire engines.
- Decommissioning of the on-call fire engine from Medway Fire Station.
- Specialist firefighting and rescue.
- Working with other organisations.
- Supporting businesses in Kent and Medway.

Sean Bone-Knell and James Finch then answered member's questions and confirmed that in Medway, there would be 1 full-time fire engine each at Watling Street Fire Station and Rochester and Strood Fire Stations and 1 on-call fire engine located in Rainham.

It was confirmed that call outs to road traffic accidents had not reduced as significantly as call outs to fires and it was considered that the reason for the reduction in fire callouts was attributable to fire prevention, the installation of fire alarms and the regulations now imposed on the materials used in the manufacture of furniture. In the past year, there had been a total of 13,000 incidents of which 4,000 had involved fires. Overall there had been a 5% reduction in the number of call outs to road traffic accidents and other incidents had also reduced across the board.

At the request of a member, James Finch agreed to provide further information on the statistics relating to the level of call-outs for specific types of incidents.

In response to a question from a member, Sean Bone-Knell advised that currently, should a part-time firefighter be called upon to undertake duty, they would attend the incident after calling into the fire station first, however over time, the authority would be looking to more flexible ways of working which may include the possibility of a part-time firefighter responding direct to the incident. He also outlined the types of employment that part-time firefighters had and emphasised the benefits that different skills can bring to the job.

In respect of the proposed reduction in the number of height vehicles from 5 to 3, it was confirmed that these vehicles would be located at Canterbury, Ashford

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and Maidstone. It was considered that this would provide sufficient cover for the whole of Kent and Medway on the basis that such vehicles were not usually required at an incident at the outset.

Members also discussed the proposed reduction of firefighting crews and the proposal to reduce the number of firefighters at on-call fire stations.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked both Sean Bone-Knell and James Finch for attending the meeting and answering member's questions on the KMFRA Safety Plan 2014.

Decision:

The Committee note the report on the KMFRA Safety Plan 2014 and that the KMFRA has agreed to provide a detailed analysis of the combined record of incidents which will be circulated to members via a briefing note.

642 2013/14 Q2 Performance Monitoring

Discussion:

The Committee received a report setting out the second quarter performance for the months of July – September 2013.

The Assistant Director – Front Line Services reported that in Quarter 2, out of 25 Council Plan key measures of success, 20 had been on target or exceeded target. In addition, he advised that 12 out of 24 key measures of success had improved over the short term and 14 out of 24 key measures of success had improved over the long term..

The Committee discussed the following areas:

- **Pavement maintenance/repairs in the Conservation Area of High Street between the town centres of Rochester and Chatham**

The Assistant Director – Front Line Services confirmed that information was currently awaited from the Conservation Officer and a draft document would shortly be submitted to the Regeneration, Community and Culture Management Team for consideration.

Members requested that they be provided with a defined timescale for these works.

- **“No Cold Calling Home” – Linking in with Neighbourhood Watch**

The Assistant Director – Front Line Services advised that since being introduced by the Trading Standards Institute, two zones had been introduced in Medway in the centre of Strood and at residential accommodation near Brompton Barracks.

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He advised that the Council received a number of enquiries about this scheme from residents and the Council worked closely with the Police in this respect. He advised that the Council would also take on board the suggestion that information be shared with Neighbourhood Watch Groups.

The Head of Safer Communities advised the Committee that the legality of the “No Cold Calling Home” scheme was currently the subject of concern by the travelling community and therefore this would need to be monitored.

- **The number of Fixed Penalty Notices paid**

The Assistant Director – Front Line Services confirmed that 75% of fixed penalty notices were normally paid and he referred to the increasing number of successful prosecutions by the Council, including those for the non payment of fixed penalty notices. He advised that Medway had the highest rate of prosecutions than any other local authority in Kent.

- **Flytipping**

In response to concerns regarding whether dumped rubbish was flytipped or rubbish that had been put out by residents too early, the Assistant Director – Front Line Services advised that the Council had a specific caged vehicle used to respond to calls relating to dumped rubbish and this avoided delays in having the rubbish removed. In the first month of its use the service had received 300 enquiries and 75% of flytipped rubbish had been removed onspot.

- **Chatham Waterfront Bus Station**

It was noted that the proposal to provide the sale of hot drinks and cold food to bus passengers had now been withdrawn at the location originally considered pending a new location.

- **Smart Ticketing**

In response to questions regarding the proposed use of smart ticketing for bus journeys and in car parks, the Head of Integrated Transport advised that the technology was moving fast and Transport for London were now looking to upgrade its existing Oyster scheme.

Arriva and Kent County Council were currently looking to pilot a system in Maidstone and, if successful, the scheme would be rolled out for use elsewhere. It was stressed that the scheme would be operated by the bus operator and would not require funding from the Council.

Members expressed concern that even if the Oyster scheme was soon to be replaced, it would make sense to encourage the use of this

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scheme in Kent and Medway so that users had one universal scheme across the whole of the South East.

The Assistant Director – Front Line Services pointed out that the provision of a smart ticketing system would be a tripartite arrangement and that it would be better to have the same system operated by Arriva and NuVenture. He confirmed that he would take members views forward in an attempt to influence the smart system selected but stressed the benefit of Medway having the same system that would be selected by bus operators for use in both Kent and Medway. He agreed to provide a briefing note on this matter.

Decision:

The report on the second quarter performance against key measures of success used to monitor progress against the Council Plan 2013/15 be noted subject to the following:

- a) A briefing note be provided on the maintenance schedule for pavements in River Ward
- b) A report or briefing note be provided on the smart ticketing system for use on public transport and in car parks in Medway.
- c) It be noted that paragraph 5.5 of the report has been amended to take account that the proposal to provide the sale of hot drinks and cold food to bus passengers had now been withdrawn.

643 Medway Cycle Action Plan (2014 - 2017) - Consultation

Discussion:

The Committee received a detailed report on the Council's provisional Cycling Action Plan 2014/17, which was currently out for consultation until 10 January 2013.

Following the consultation period, a final document would be produced and published in April 2014.

The following issues were discussed:

- **Funding of projects**

A member referring to the various funding references within the report stated that it would be helpful for members to receive a breakdown as to the costs associated with the various elements of the Cycle Plan and requested that this be provided to each member outside of the meeting. In response, the Head of Integrated Transport advised that the capital projects that arise from the action plan will be funded from the Local Transport Plan Integrated Block Allocation and Section 106 contributions where appropriate, and he agreed that this information can be supplied to members for information.

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- **Cleanliness of cycle paths**

A member referred to the cleanliness of cycle paths and in particular the need to ensure the removal of broken glass.

- **Various specific routes**

A member suggested that further consideration be given to the route of descent for cyclists in Dock Road leading to Chatham Bus Station as this route was very narrow. Officers agreed to further consider this route.

A member also requested that consideration be given to the section of route in Shirley Avenue/Maidstone Road, Chatham through to Asda as this was not very wide and he had concern regarding egress by residents. He suggested that this site be looked at as to whether it was possible to channel the cycle path across the road. The Head of Integrated Transport advised that the Road Safety Team had assessed all recorded accidents and he was not aware of any accidents at this site, he agreed to look at this site again but commented that it was unlikely that a cyclist would cross the road to follow the cycle path.

Concern was expressed regarding the provision of a cycle path in Wood Street in Gillingham as this road was very narrow. In response, the Head of Integrated Transport advised that a cycle path was already available in Prince Arthur Road and Dock Road and the proposed cycle path in Wood Street connected these together. Discussion ensued regarding the possible provision of the Wood Street cycle path being provided off carriageway.

A member referred to Maidstone Road in Rochester and expressed concern regarding the possible use of a cycle path which would run past an industrial estate heavily used by HGV's. The Head of Integrated Transport advised that he would investigate this section of road but initially considered that it may fall within the area of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council.

Decision:

The Committee considered and noted the provisional Cycle Action Plan and noted that Officers will undertake the following:

- a) Consider increasing the cleaning of specific cycle paths to remove broken glass.
- b) Provide briefing note on the funding elements of the various capital projects contained in the action plan.
- c) Note concerns raised in respect of the safety of cycle paths in Dock Road Chatham, Maidstone Road, Rochester and Maidstone Road Chatham and Wood Street, Gillingham and further information on these paths be included as part of the briefing note referred to b) above.

644 Chatham World Heritage Planning Policy Document

Discussion:

The Committee received a detailed report setting out progress towards the adoption of the Chatham World Heritage Planning Policy Document.

It was explained that the Chatham World Heritage Planning Policy Document had been prepared to have the status of, and the same planning weight as, a Supplementary Planning Document. The document had been drafted with significant stakeholder involvement and had been the subject of public consultation in accordance with the Medway Statement of Community Involvement and conformed to the National Planning Policy Framework and Development Plan for Medway.

It was confirmed that the Planning Policy Document would be considered for adoption by Cabinet on 14 January 2014 and Council on 20 February 2014.

It was explained that the Chatham World Heritage Planning Policy Document had three parts. The first provided an outline of existing planning policy guidance, drawing together the various existing policy documents relating to the site. It included reference to key management plans for significant components of the site, and contained detailed advice about how individual heritage assets or groups thereof would be managed.

The second part described how some of the site's principal heritage assets (known as attributes) were represented in key views and how these could be managed to ensure that the uniqueness of Chatham Dockyard is protected and enhanced.

Finally, part three of the document set out the methodology, in line with national guidance, that would be used to assess future development and regeneration proposals in the context of Chatham's world class heritage and its bid for World Heritage Site Status.

The full draft document was appended to the report.

The consultation draft had been produced by Medway Council's Planning Policy and Design Team, with input from Chatham World Heritage, Development Management, and the members of the Chatham World Heritage Steering Group. This has included two half-day workshop sessions, and considerable additional support from English Heritage, Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust and the Homes and Communities Agency. It was therefore considered to be a comprehensive draft, with sustainability at its core.

Members referred to a recent politics show broadcast on television and expressed concern that in this programme the issue of World Heritage sites and its affect on planning had been ridiculed. In response, the Assistant Director Housing and Regeneration advised the Committee that the broadcast

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had been a 13 minute slot on BBC South East and that the vast majority of speakers had been supportive of World heritage sites. He confirmed that both the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Development and Economic Growth and a representative of the Chatham Historic Dockyard had been interviewed. However it was unfortunate that the only section of the broadcast shown on the news was a short section that had been critical of the proposals. Officers were currently taking media advice on a formal response.

A member referred to the site buffer zone and expressed the view that he would not wish this to hinder future employment opportunities at the Medway City Estate. In response the Chatham World Heritage Manager confirmed that the Chatham World Heritage Development Steering Group had a protocol of commenting on planning applications and she confirmed that World Heritage Status must work for Medway and not limit activities on the Medway City Estate.

A member referring to 'Victoria Tower' advised that locally this was known as 'Melville Court Tower' and it was suggested that it may be appropriate to change the report to reflect this.

Decision:

The forthcoming adoption of the Chatham World Heritage Planning Policy Document be supported.

645 Update on Domestic Abuse

Discussion:

The Committee was reminded that the responsibility for co-ordinating the council and its partners' work around domestic abuse had passed from the Assistant Director Housing and Corporate Services to the Assistant Director - Front Line Services in January 2012.

The Committee received a report setting out progress since the last report in November 2012.

The Committee was advised that there was a multi-agency commitment to the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy 2013 – 2016 which had the following objectives:

- Preventing Abuse - To prevent domestic abuse from happening in the first place, by challenging the attitudes and behaviours which foster it and intervening early to prevent it.
- Provision of Services - Provide adequate levels of support when domestic abuse occurs.

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- Justice Outcomes and Risk Reduction - Take action to reduce the risk to domestic abuse victims and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice.
- Partnership Working - Work in partnership to obtain the best outcomes for those affected by domestic abuse and their families.

The Committee was advised of the following national developments and progress in Medway:

- Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme
- Definition of Domestic Violence
- Teenage Relationship Abuse and Rape Prevention
- Stalking Laws
- Domestic Violence Protection Orders
- The establishment of a Community Safety Sub Group reporting to the Medway Safeguarding Children's Board
- Co-ordination with Kent County Council
- Commissioning of an Independent Domestic Violence Adviser.
- Schools Notifications Pilot in five Wards between September 2012 – July 2013.
- Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse report into defining Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference Outcomes
- Domestic Homicide Reviews
- Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse
- Refuges and Housing Related Support

Referring to the Schools Notification Pilot set out at paragraph 4.4.1 of the report, a member requested that a briefing note be provided setting out information on the pilot scheme operated in 5 Wards between September 2012 and July 2013. It was also suggested that a report on the Schools Notification Pilot also be referred to the Health and Adult Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

A member referring to the recently signed military covenant sought clarification as to whether the Council was undertaking any work with the military on domestic abuse and requested that information be submitted to a future meeting on this matter. The Head of Safer Communities advised that no work had been undertaken on this issue to date but agreed that this could be looked at in the future.

During discussion on this item, as a member had referred to the Schools Notification Pilot (paragraph 4.4.1) Councillor Griffiths declared an interest on the basis that he is a Non-Executive Director of Medway Community Healthcare.

Decision:

- a) The content of the report be noted;

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- b) A briefing note be supplied to all members on the Schools Notification Pilot;
- c) A report on the Schools Notification Pilot be submitted to the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and
- d) Future reports include information on the implications of domestic abuse in military families.

646 Member's Item: Use of 'Riverside', a bus only street, Strood

Discussion:

The Committee was reminded that under Medway's Constitution, (Chapter 4, part 5 paragraph 9.1), Councillor Hubbard had requested that consideration be given to the possibility of taxi's being permitted to use 'Riverside', which was a bus only street between Canal Road and Commissioners Road in Strood.

The Committee received a detailed report setting out the response to consultation with Ward Councillors and local residents in the vicinity of the site, the views of the Director arising from the consultation exercise, an assessment of current usage of the street in question and the implications of opening up this street for use by taxis.

The Committee discussed the report noting the likely implications on vehicular movements and information supplied by the Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture that should it be decided to open 'Riverside' for use by taxis, the likely costs would be in the region of £4,500 - £5,000 to meet the cost of a planning application and a Traffic Regulation Order.

Decision:

The Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture be advised that this Committee supports the opening up of 'Riverside', a bus only street between Canal Road and Commissioners Road in Strood for use by taxis and be requested to discuss this with the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services.

647 Draft Capital and Revenue Budgets 2014/15

Discussion:

The Committee received a detailed report setting out the draft capital and revenue budget for 2014/15 as it related to this Committee.

A member referring to paragraph 5.3.1 of the report (Impact on Front Line Services) expressed the view that as reported it was not possible to assess the potential impact and therefore it would be helpful to have additional information supplied as to the consequence of service delivery so that priorities could be identified if necessary.

Referring to this comment, the Assistant Director – Front Line Services stated that this was not always straightforward for example using demographic

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projections for concessionary fares, this was carried out via a National Consultation Scheme and the budget would not be agreed until Spring 2014.

Decision:

The Committee thanked Officers for the draft capital and revenue budget report for 2014/15 and noted the report insofar as it affects this Committee.

648 Petitions

Discussion:

The Committee received a report setting out the petitions received and a summary of officer responses to petitioners.

The Assistant Director - Frontline Services provided an update on the work carried out by the Informal Members Working Group that looked into the Parking Permit Zones in Chatham as a result of the petition presented to the Committee on 11 April 2013. He advised that a further petition had been received relating to residents of Carlton House and a report on this would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee for consideration.

A member referred to the petition asking Medway Council to undertake a Community Impact Study before spending £4.4 million on Rochester Airport. He expressed concern that in his opinion, the response formulated to the petitioner gave an impression that whilst the Council would not undertake a Community Impact Study given the processes yet to be followed this might be undertaken at a later stage and he had concern that to consider this at a later stage may be too late.

The Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture advised the Committee that the response had been sent to the petitioner and the ten day deadline for a request for the petition to be referred to this Committee had now passed without the petitioner responding. He confirmed that one of the next stages of the Rochester Airport proposals was for the Masterplan to be submitted to the Civil Aviation Authority. Public consultation would take place as part of this process.

The Committee discussed the likelihood of a Community Impact Study taking place at a later stage in the process and it was noted that such study could be formalised through the planning application process.

A member referring to the petitions process, expressed concern that petitioners were only advised of the ten day deadline for asking that their petition be referred to Committee when receiving an initial acknowledgement letter and that such information was not repeated in the later letter submitting the Council's formal response. It was considered that it would be helpful for this information to also be included in the formal response letter as a reminder to the petitioner.

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Decision:

- a) The Committee note the petition responses and appropriate officer action as set out in paragraph 3 of the report.
- b) The report on the Parking Permit Zones carried out by the Member's Informal Working Group be noted.
- c) Officers be requested to give further consideration to the inclusion of the paragraph advising petitioners of the ten day deadline for submission of a request for their petition to be referred to Committee in the letter providing a written formal response in addition to the initial acknowledgement letter.

649 Work programme

Discussion:

The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report and advised the Committee that since despatch of the agenda, one item had been added to the Forward Plan as follows:

- Gateway 3 Contract Award – SEN Transport Contracts

In the light of this addition, Councillor Griffiths requested that it be noted that his wife was employed at Danecourt School.

Decision:

The Committee noted the current work programme.

Chairman

Date:

Ellen Wright, Democratic Services Officer

Telephone: 01634 332013

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