

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

**Thursday, 26 June 2014**

**6.35pm to 9.15pm**

**Record of the meeting**

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

**Present:** Councillors: Carr (Chairman), Griffin, Griffiths, Adrian Gulvin (Vice-Chairman), Hubbard, Juby, Mackinlay, Osborne, Stamp and Turpin

**Substitutes:** Councillors:  
Clarke (Substitute for Mason)  
Pat Gulvin (Substitute for Bright)  
Iles (Substitute for Etheridge)

**In Attendance:** Robin Cooper, Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture  
Stephen Gaimster, Assistant Director, Housing and Regeneration  
Andy McGrath, Assistant Director, Front Line Services  
Tim England, Head of Safer Communities  
Neil Howlett, Community Safety Partnership Manager  
Priscilla Mumby, Flood Drainage and Special Projects Officer  
Bryan Shawyer, Road Safety Manager  
Amanda Berger-North, Locum Legal Representative  
Ellen Wright, Democratic Services Officer

Representing the Community Safety Partnership

Councillor Peter Hicks - Chairman  
Superintendent Thomas Richards, Kent Police  
Mike Adams, Assistant Director Service Delivery - Kent Fire and Rescue Service  
Dr Alison Barnett, Director of Public Health  
Cynthia Allen, Director - Kent Probation  
Keith Gulvin, Youth Offending Team Manager

**93 Record of meeting held on 10 April 2014 and Joint Meeting of All Committees on 14 May 2014**

The record of the meeting held on 10 April 2014 and the record of the Joint Meeting of All Committees held on 14 May were agreed and signed by the Chairman as correct.

**94 Apologies for absence**

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

**95 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances**

There were none.

**96 Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman introduced Amanda Berger-North as the legal representative on the Committee to replace Hannah Langford.

**97 Declarations of interests and whipping**

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other interests

The Chairman, Councillor Carr referred to agenda item 5 (Annual Scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership) and advised the Committee that as a member of the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority he would not be speaking on this item as a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Councillor Carr vacated the Chair and sat in the public gallery for the consideration of this item.

Councillor Griffiths referring to Item 7 (Rochester Riverside Masterplan) declared an interest in that he serves on the Rochester Riverside Project Board. Councillor Griffiths left the meeting for the consideration of this item.

Councillor Adrian Gulvin referred to agenda item 5 (Annual Scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership) and advised the Committee that as a member of the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority he would not be speaking on this item as a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In addition, he declared that his brother was the Youth Offending Team Manager and was present for this particular item. Councillor Adrian Gulvin also declared that should Dr Nathan attend for Item 5 (Annual Scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership), he would also need to declare that Dr Nathan is his GP. (Dr Nathan did not attend). Councillor Gulvin vacated his seat on the Committee and sat in the public gallery for the consideration of this item.

Councillor Pat Gulvin referred to agenda item 5 (Annual Scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership) and declared that her brother-in-law was the Youth Offending Team Manager who was present for the item relating to scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership.

## **Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 26 June 2014**

Councillor Stamp declared an interest in agenda item 6 (Flood and Water Management Act 2010 – Roles and Responsibilities and the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy) as he works for the Environment Agency and the Agency has responsibilities for coastal waters and flooding issues.

### **98 Annual Scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership**

#### **Discussion:**

In the absence of the Chairman and Vice Chairman, the Committee agreed that Councillor Mackinlay chair the meeting and Councillor Griffin act as Vice Chairman for the consideration of this item .

The Chairman of the Community Partnership, Councillor Hicks introduced a report on the operation of the Community Safety Partnership for 2013 – 2014.

It was noted that in the absence of Chief Inspector Vaughan Lukey, Superintendent Thomas Richards was in attendance to represent Kent Police.

In line with the request of the Committee at its meeting on 10 April 2014, a detailed report was submitted setting out work undertaken over the past 12 months along with a copy of the Community Partnership Action Plan which set out indicators, targets and updated information under each of the five priorities in the Community Safety Partnership Plan 2013-2016 together with a look ahead to future planned activity for the following:

- Priority 1 – Tackle drug and alcohol abuse
- Priority 2 – Tackle anti-social behaviour and enviro-crime
- Priority 3 – Reduce re-offending
- Priority 4 – Tackle domestic abuse
- Priority 5 – Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions

The Committee then discussed various elements of the report and action plan including the following:

#### **Family Function Therapy**

It was confirmed that the Family Function Therapy had been available for two years and had two themes, one involved keeping young people out of care and the other to keep young people out of custody. Early indicators showed that the therapy sessions had helped to reduce re-offending and further statistics would be available within the next six months. A full review would be undertaken when the pilot project ended in March 2015.

#### **The number of persons killed or seriously injured in Road Traffic Collisions**

## **Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 26 June 2014**

It was noted that there had been an unfortunate peak in 2013 in the number of persons killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions with a 9.8% increase on 2012 data from 51 to 56 persons.

The representative from the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Service briefly outlined the work that the Road Safety Team undertake in conjunction with Officers from Medway Council in staging activities in local schools aimed at educating young people in aspects of road safety.

He further advised that a new Road Safety Experience would be available from September 2015 at the new Fire Station in Rochester. This would enable young people to experience the hazards of driving.

### **PCSO's**

Superintendent Richards advised that there were currently 38 PCSO's operating across Medway and there was a 6.4 % vacancy rate. Two new PCSO's would be starting in August.

It was confirmed that overall, PCSO's had 20 standard powers and 22 discretionary powers that could be granted to PCSO's at the discretion of the Chief Constable. In Kent, 10 out of 22 discretionary powers had been granted to PCSO's. A paper was currently with the Chief Constable for consideration to be given to the remaining 12 discretionary powers. If the powers of the PCSO's were to be increased in the future, Superintendent Richards would communicate this to the Council.

In response to a request for PCSO's to be granted powers to issue parking tickets to vehicles parked on pavements, Superintendent Richards advised that this was not a power that could be granted to PCSO's in a Non-Metropolitan Police Force. A Member expressed concern that this information had not been provided in the past when this issue had been raised. Superintendent Richards reassured the Committee that he understood that this was an issue of significant concern to Members and agreed to investigate other possible action either via the PCSO's or other policing resources.

### **April 2013 – March 2014 statistics**

It was noted that the Police had recently introduced a different crime recording mechanism and that this had contributed to a small increase in recorded crime. Superintendent Richards advised that some categories of crime were affected by outside influences and reducing crime was the only target set for the Police by the Home Office.

Referring to level of increase in the statistics for Violence Against the Person, it was confirmed that this was of concern for both the Community Safety Partnership and Kent Police. As a result, significant resources had been directed towards this area and a number of activities were currently being pursued in an attempt to reduce this criminal activity. This included a Peer

## **Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 26 June 2014**

Group Review at the College of Policing to assess whether there were best practice examples from which lessons could be learnt.

A Member referred to the statistics for 'Burglary from Dwellings' and drew attention to the increased figures over the past two years. He suggested that in the light of these increases, the Community Safety Partnership may wish to consider this area a priority in 2014 – 2015.

### **Tackling Substance Abuse**

In response to a Member's concern regarding treatment for alcohol abusers, Dr Alison Barnett - Director for Public Health, confirmed that funding for treatment had focussed on drug use but confirmed that the new service would cover both alcohol and drug users.

She advised that Alcohol Identification and Brief Advice (IBA) was evidence based intervention which was low cost and effective and aimed to treat people and change drinking habits. She advised that a member of Turning Point would be happy to attend an appropriate meeting of the Council to discuss the service once it was up and running, if this was required.

### **Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC)**

Superintendent Richards confirmed that MARAC's were very successful in managing domestic abuse issues and in the light of their success they may be expanded for use in medium risk cases in addition to high risk cases.

The Assistant Director – Front Line Services confirmed that domestic abuse was not just a Police matter and required partnership working. He confirmed that domestic abuse was now receiving a higher level of support than previously and there would be increased work on signposting access to services for medium and lower visible groups. A Co-ordinator was now in place to work with partnerships and to put projects in place.

### **Sexual Offences**

Concern was expressed at the increased level of sexual offences in the past year. This had been almost a 50% increase above previous years.

Superintendent Richards confirmed that all Police Forces had experienced an increase in the recording of sexual offences and it was considered that this had been a direct result of the national publicity surrounding police investigations into various individuals/celebrities. Therefore, the data related to historical reporting of sexual offences rather than current cases. Superintendent Richards advised that if required he could obtain specific statistics and supply them outside of the meeting.

On a positive note, the increased number of reported sexual offences indicated success in getting across the message that sexual offences should be reported.

### **Identity Crime**

A member referred to an emerging issue in Gillingham involving persons sorting through refuse, possibly seeking information that could be used for the purposes of identity fraud.

The Assistant Director- Front Line Services confirmed that this issue was Medway wide and also experienced by local authorities across the United Kingdom

He referred to a recent operation carried out jointly with the Police following which two groups of individuals had been challenged. Both related to individuals searching for scrap metal in rubbish rather than obtaining data.

### **Community Payback**

It was suggested that if any Member knew of any projects that would be suitable for the Community Payback Scheme, they advise either Tim England – Head of Safer Communities or Neil Howlett – Community Safety Partnership Manager.

### **Decision:**

- a) The representatives of the Community Safety Partnership be thanked for attending the meeting to report on the work of the Community Safety Partnership for 2013 – 2014.
- b) The Assistant Director – Front Line Services be requested to discuss with the partners of the Community Safety Partnership the issue of pavement parking.
- c) It be noted that the Chief Constable is currently reviewing powers granted to PCSOs and that Superintendent Richards will provide an update on the full range of PCSO powers in the near future.
- d) It be agreed that the annual scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership should take place at the same time that the Committee considers the findings of the Strategic Assessment and Action Plan, noting that the effect in 2014 will be the scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership in December 2014.

## **99 Flood and Water Management Act 2010 - Roles and Responsibilities and the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy**

### **Discussion:**

The Committee received a detailed report setting out changes in legislation and introducing the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy required under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

A copy of the Flood Risk Management Strategy had been circulated as a Supplementary Agenda.

## **Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 26 June 2014**

The Committee discussed the report and Priscilla Mumby, the Flood Risk Management Officer responded with the following additional information:

- Confirmation that the Strategy will be a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
- Whilst she was not an expert on the chemical quality of ground water, this was an issue that could be investigated.
- The local authority worked closely with the Water Companies and held quarterly meetings with Southern Water and the Environment Agency and both companies would advise of any potential flood risk arising from reduced abstractions.
- Larger scale maps could be provided and, if any Member considered that items such as historic landfill sites were missing from the maps, they were requested to advise officers.
- Whilst the Guide to Developer Contributions proposed for adoption to Cabinet on 15 July 2014 and, forming part of this Committee's agenda did not include reference to flooding, it was intended that flooding would be included within the Guide at a future date.
- It was noted that reference to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) required removal from paragraph 7.3.8 of the Strategy.

The Committee discussed the flood risk emergency that had taken place in December 2013 and expressed appreciation to those staff who had worked through the night. It was noted that these staff had recently been awarded a Make a Difference Award in recognition of their work. The Flood Risk Management Officer confirmed that although the response to the emergency had been considered a success, Officers would still be reviewing the emergency procedures put in place for that incident to assess whether any improvements could be made.

### **Decision:**

The Committee thanked the Flood Risk Management Officer for her report and agreed the following;

- a) The new responsibilities added to the Employee Delegation Scheme be noted;
- b) The progress of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy be noted
- c) The Committee's appreciation be extended to those staff involved in the recent flood risk which involved work beyond the call of duty.
- d) It be noted that flood risk will form part of the Guide to Developer Contributions at a future date.

## **100 Rochester Riverside Masterplan**

### **Discussion:**



## Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 26 June 2014

The Committee was informed that the draft revised Development Brief and Masterplan for Rochester Riverside had been the subject of public consultation between 28 April – 6 June 2014.

A copy of the Development Brief and Masterplan had been produced as a Supplementary Agenda and formed Appendices 1 and 2 to the report. A draft summary of representations received following the consultation period was also submitted as Appendix 3.

It was noted that the Development Brief and Masterplan would be submitted to Cabinet on 5 August 2014 for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Arising from discussions, the following issues were highlighted:

- A member requested that if Castle View Estate is to remain part of the development site, it not be made a through road.
- It was noted that Section 106 contributions would include provision of a new school and Officers were also in discussion with colleagues in the Children's and Adults Directorate regarding the requirements for school places in Strood and Rochester.
- It was proposed that parking provision would have regard to the Interim Parking Standards and the fact that this site is in an urban location and sited in close proximity to the new Rochester Railway Station;
- Following an analysis of the local road network and, in view of the recent improvements to Corporation Street in Rochester, it was considered that the existing roads would be capable of taking additional traffic generated by the development.
- Provision for secure bicycle storage would be available at Rochester Railway Station and elsewhere within the development.
- Consideration had been given to the inclusion of commercial development within the site and it was possible that a Waterside Public House could form part of the development along with some modest commercial development located near the Railway Station.
- The development would include provision for a communal squares and event areas having regard to the fact that this site is a riverside development.
- The wish for provision for a pier/vessel moorings was noted but this would have to be considered on practical grounds having regard to the fact that the River Medway is a tidal river.
- It was proposed that there would be about 1400 homes provided within the development. This figure was less than originally referred to in previous reports as the number of flats had been reduced and the number of houses increased.
- It was confirmed that land disposal arrangements were in place.
- It was confirmed that the Masterplan would require 25% affordable housing.
- It was proposed that 250 car parking spaces would be provided at Rochester Railway Station at ground level, however, the car park would



## Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 26 June 2014

be built in such way that a further floor could be provided if this was required at a future date.

### Decision:

- a) The Committee welcomed the vision for a high quality development at Rochester Riverside and noted that the revised Development Brief and Masterplan for Rochester Riverside and the results of the consultation and comments will be considered as part of the review period and incorporated into the development work for the final version of the Brief.
- b) This Committees comments be submitted as follows:
  - Officers be requested to investigate provision of an open air entertainment area within the area;
  - Officers investigate the provision of mooring facilities for visiting small craft;
  - It be noted that Officers have confirmed that a good level of secure cycle parking provision will be provided within the development;
  - The level of parking provision within the development should conform to the Council's Interim Parking Standards;
  - The proposed development should include provision of a primary school on site; and
  - Castle View Estate not be made a through road within the development.

### 101 De-cluttering Strood High Street - Update

#### Discussion:

The Assistant Director – Front Line Services reminded the Committee that at its meeting on 23 June 2013, this Committee had supported the suggestion of the De-cluttering Streets in Medway Task Group that Strood High Street be used as a pilot project. Cabinet had subsequently agreed this recommendation at its meeting on 9 July 2013.

The Committee was further reminded that at the Task Group meeting on 23 May 2013 it had been recommended that engineers determine if the existing pedestrian pinch point outside 107 High Street (Rainham Meats) could be eliminated, thereby allowing the possible removal of the pedestrian guardrailing at this location.

The Committee received a detailed report setting out the current position in respect of de-cluttering and other works in Strood High Street along with A3 coloured drawings outlining the proposals.

It was recognised that the Pilot Project had expanded to incorporate other Local Transport Plan interventions for the High Street, including accessibility and

## Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 26 June 2014

modal shift and whilst there were cost savings associated with any combined scheme, these aspects would be separately funded as follows:

- Rainham Meats footway widening at £23,138
- St Nicholas' Church footway widening at £29,378.36
- NatWest Bank near Station Road junction footway widening at £24,667.50
- Puffin crossing conversion (outside Iceland) at £30,000
- Zebra crossing on Gun Lane at £30,000

It was stressed that the proposed works would be subject to a consultation exercise involving:

- Fronting properties
- Strood Town Centre Manager and Town Centre Forum
- Guide Dogs for the Blind
- Kent Association for the Blind
- Medway Learning Disability Partnership
- Local members and the Portfolio Holder
- Kent Police and statutory undertakers

The Committee discussed the report and the following issues were highlighted:

- The replacement of floor standing litterbins with bins attached to lampposts would not result in a reduction in litterbin capacity overall.
- Whilst it was proposed to remove 2.5 metres of guardrail near Rainham Meats, 6.7 metres of guardrail would be left in place.
- It was suggested that a survey be undertaken regarding the possible retention of the guardrail at the pelican crossing outside St Nicholas' Church.
- In the light of the footfall of school children who could potentially be crossing the High Street, the Assistant Director Front Line Services agreed to investigate the possible provision of a pedestrian crossing near Wilkinsons.
- Officers be requested to arrange a pre-consultation meeting with the Ward Councillors for Strood North, Strood South and Strood Rural Wards, and Councillor Hubbard requested that he and Councillor Igwe also have the opportunity of a 1:1 with officers to discuss the proposals;
- Consultation on the proposals for Strood High Street also include other interested parties including St Nicholas' School, All Faiths Primary School and Gordon Infant and Junior School and St Nicholas' Church;
- Officers were requested to investigate the regularity of the emptying of the litterbin near to Strood Station as it often overflowed at weekends.

The Assistant Director - Front Line Task Force confirmed that following the selection of Strood High Street for the pilot de-cluttering project, the scope of the project had widened to involve regeneration works for the High Street area. He confirmed that funding for the additional works was available from within the Local Transport Plan allocation. He commented that Strood High Street was

## **Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 26 June 2014**

particularly unique as a Town Centre in respect of the variation of the width of the pavement areas and in some areas, the path width was very narrow.

Members commented that the widening of the remit of the Strood Pilot Project could undermine its usefulness as a pilot in respect of lessons to be learnt. The Road Safety Manager confirmed that once the Strood Project had progressed, a de-cluttering manual could be drawn up for future projects and such manual would be reported back to this Committee.

### **Decision:**

- a) The Committee expressed its appreciation to officers for the work undertaken on the Strood High Street project and noted the report and the work underway to reduce the number of obstructions to pedestrian movements and improve the visual appearance of Strood Town Centre; and
- b) Prior to undertaking a consultation on the proposed works within Strood High Street, Officers meet with Ward Councillors and Parish Councillors to discuss the proposals.

## **102 Update on Guide to Developer Contributions**

### **Discussion:**

The Assistant Director – Housing and Regeneration informed the Committee that the Council's Guide to Developer Contributions, a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), had been adopted by the Council in April 2008 and revised in November 2012. The Guide set out the level of Section 106 contributions a developer should provide when proposing to build 10 or more dwellings. Such Guide was to be regularly updated to adjust contributions in line with inflation and to include reference to any new evidence base or legislation.

At its meeting on 8 April 2014, Cabinet had agreed to undertake a consultation exercise on a revised Guide, a copy of which was set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

It was confirmed that the revised Guide took account of the National Planning Policy Framework issued by the Government in March 2012.

A summary of representations received following consultations undertaken between 22 April – 30 May 2014 was set out at Appendix 2 to the report. Representations were currently being considered and the draft Guide would be updated to address issues raised by consultees following which it would be submitted to Cabinet for adoption on 15 July 2014.

Referring to Section 106 contributions from fast food outlets and relating to flood management, it was confirmed once Cabinet had adopted Strategies on these issues the Guide would be updated to include these topics.

## **Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 26 June 2014**

The Council intended to continue to levy Section 106 contributions until a revised Local Plan had been adopted.

The Committee considered the report and members received clarification on a number of issues as follows:

- As 'Health' related contributions relate to infrastructure, funding would be passed onto the NHS and not retained by the Council.
- The Developer Contribution Guide, once adopted could be updated as and when necessary to taken account of flood risk without the requirement to wait for the Community Infrastructure Levy to be introduced.
- The level of funds received via the proposed Community Infrastructure Levy was likely to be approximately equal funds received through Section 106 agreements.
- The Council has adopted Interim parking standards that are used by the Planning Committee in determining planning applications.

### **Decision:**

The revised Developer Contribution Guide 2014 (for consultation) and the representations received be noted.

## **103 Petitions**

### **Discussion:**

The Committee noted that since the last meeting, six petitions relevant to the work of this Committee had been received, details of which were set out in the report along with the Director's response.

A member referring to the petition relating to extra paths through verges between Boughton Close and Charing Road, suggested that removed paving slabs be used for these crossovers. The Assistant Director – Front Line Task Force agreed to investigate this matter.

### **Decision:**

The Committee note the Officers response to the petitions and that as the petitioners have not sought a review of the matter by this Committee, the report was for information only.

## **104 Work programme**

### **Discussion:**

The Committee received and considered its work programme.

## **Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 26 June 2014**

The Democratic Services Officer reported upon a number of changes/additions to the Committee's work programme which had been discussed at the agenda planning meeting, details of which were outlined in the report.

A member expressed concern regarding the delay in the reporting of quarter 3 performance statistics which would be at the end of the financial year.

### **Decision:**

In line with the decisions/suggestions from the agenda planning meeting the Committee's work programme be updated as follows:

- The inclusion of a programme of attendance by the Leader and Portfolio Holders for 2014/15.
- The inclusion of a Member's Item in August from Councillor Osborne relating to wi-fi access across Medway.
- The outcome of the consultation process for the Medway Statement of Community Involvement to be reported in August.
- The inclusion of Capital and Revenue Budget monitoring in December.
- The reporting of Quarter 3 Performance Monitoring to be scheduled for April 2015 not January 2015.
- The removal of the report on the Community Infrastructure Levy from the list of reports for which dates have yet to be determined.
- High marginal cost of bus travel be reported on 18 December 2014; and
- A report on the Community Officer Service be reported on 18 December 2014.

**Chairman**

**Date:**

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