

Medway Council
Meeting of Regeneration, Culture and Environment
Overview And Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 18 October 2018

6.30pm to 8.56pm

Record of the meeting

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

Present: Councillors: Bhutia (Vice-Chairman), Etheridge (Chairman), Griffin, Hicks, Osborne, Paterson, Saroy, Tejan and Williams

Substitutes: Councillors:
Fearn (Substitute for Carr)
Gilry (Substitute for Shaw)
Maple (Substitute for Stamp)
Purdy (Substitute for Mrs Josie Iles)

In Attendance: Richard Hicks, Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive
Ruth Du-Lieu, Assistant Director, Front Line Services
Anna Marie Lawrence, Head of Business Intelligence
Vicky Nutley, Assistant Head of Legal Services
Daniel Ratcliff, Skills and Employment Programme Manager
Ellen Wright, Democratic Services Officer

451 Chairman's announcements

At the commencement of the meeting, the Chairman informed the Committee that the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Jane Chitty would not be attending this meeting owing to a recent bereavement.

The Committee extended its condolences to Councillor Jane Chitty.

452 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Carr, Mrs Josie Iles, Shaw and Stamp.

453 Record of Meeting

The record of the meeting held on 16 August 2018 was agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

454 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

455 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

There were none.

Other interests

There were none.

456 Petitions

Discussion

The Committee received a report advising of petitions received by the Council which fell within the remit of this Committee.

Members were advised that the following petition had been referred for discussion by the lead petitioner as he had been dissatisfied with the response received by the Director:

i) **Petition for the CCTV camera outside the Twydall post office to be repaired**

The Chairman welcomed John Lloyd to the meeting and invited him to address the Committee.

Mr Lloyd thanked the Committee for inviting him to speak on his petition. He advised that his petition requested the repair of the CCTV camera outside the post office in Twydall. In response to his petition, he had been advised that the Council was in the process of auditing all CCTV camera stock in Medway and that once the audit was complete, a decision would be made as to which cameras required repair or replacement.

Mr Lloyd considered this response to be unsatisfactory as no timescale had been given for the conclusion of the audit, nor had there been any guarantee that the CCTV cameras in Twydall shopping parade would be repaired or replaced. He added that the public and shopkeepers in Twydall were now reliant on private CCTV cameras for their safety.

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Mr Lloyd stated that shopping centres should be priority locations for the provision of CCTV cameras and he requested information as to the date the audit would be concluded. He also sought an assurance that the CCTV camera outside Twydall post office would be repaired as a matter of urgency.

The Assistant Director Front Line Services advised that the CCTV camera outside Twydall post office could not be repaired and therefore required replacement. She was unable to confirm the date by which this work would be undertaken at this meeting but agreed to inform Mr Lloyd direct when this work would be undertaken.

Members discussed the CCTV audit and referred to a number of CCTV cameras in Medway which required repair or replacement and stressed the importance of the outcome of the audit being made available as soon as possible. The Committee also discussed the issue of responsibility for the repair, replacement and maintenance of the CCTV cameras.

The Assistant Director Front Line Services informed the Committee that the CCTV audit was being undertaken in consultation with the Police and Medway Commercial Group Ltd (MCG) and involved two work streams. The first priority would be the replacement of CCTV cameras in key locations which would include Twydall shopping centre and the second work stream would be the strategic approach going forward. This second stream in consultation with the Police would involve identification of those sites where CCTV cameras were required and an assessment of the latest technology available. She confirmed that work was still underway on the audit and therefore it was not yet possible to identify when this would be completed.

The Committee discussed this issue and a number of Members referred to other sites in Medway where the provision of CCTV cameras was considered essential. Concern was expressed as to the lack of clarity on the conclusion date of the audit and officers were requested to ensure that the audit was expedited as a matter of urgency.

In response to questions, the Assistant Director Front Line Services clarified that whilst the Council retained ownership of the CCTV stock, maintenance of the CCTV system was now the responsibility of MCG. Under this arrangement, MCG had regularly maintained CCTV cameras and the infrastructure of the system and when individual cameras were beyond repair, action was put in place for them to be replaced. However, this required funds to be identified to undertake the work.

The Assistant Director Front Line Services also confirmed that as part of the CCTV audit, an assessment would be made as to the anticipated lifespan of a CCTV camera as it was accepted that many of the cameras in Medway had been in place for many years.

Arising from discussions, the Committee queried the public statement made by the Chief Executive of MCG concerning replacement of cameras. The Assistant

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Director Front Line Services agreed to provide clarification to the Member and Ward Councillor direct on this statement.

The Committee suggested that MCG be invited to attend a meeting of the Committee so that the Committee could discuss its concerns about CCTV provision direct. The Chairman stated that this would be more appropriately considered by the Committee under the item on the agenda headed 'Work Programme'.

The Committee also requested that when it receives a full report on the CCTV audit, the report also include information as to the lifespan of CCTV cameras and whether MCG had taken over a full complement of working CCTV cameras when the service had been transferred from the Council to MCG.

Decision:

The Committee:

- a) thanked Mr Lloyd for attending the meeting and addressing the Committee on his petition;
- b) noted that the Assistant Director Front Line Services will provide the lead petitioner and Ward Councillors with an update on progress in replacing the CCTV camera outside Twydall post office within 7 days of the date of this meeting and will provide the Committee with a full update at its next meeting on 6 December 2018;
- c) requested that a full report on work stream 1 of the CCTV audit be reported to the Committee at its next meeting on 6 December 2018;
- d) requested that prior to receiving the report referred to at c) above on 6 December 2018, Members be provided with a breakdown of CCTV cameras on a Ward by Ward basis (but not to include specific locations) and information as to the number of cameras which are not working, with such information being provided by mid-November;
- e) requested that a briefing note be sent to Members by mid-November outlining the progress on the CCTV audit and setting out a plan showing the overall timescales for the remainder of the review;
- f) noted that the Assistant Director Front Line Services will provide clarification to the Member and the Ward Councillor direct as to the public statement made by Chief Executive of Medway Commercial Group regarding replacement of CCTV cameras;
- g) noted that the possibility of inviting MCG to the Committee on 6 December 2018 to discuss the Committee's concerns with the CCTV provision will be considered under the Work Programme item later on the agenda.

ii) Completed petitions

The Committee considered the remainder of the report and in particular noted progress on the petition against the removal of secure motorcycle parking from the Commercial Road Car Park in Strood following a meeting with the lead

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petitioner on 21 September 2018 also attended by the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services and the Chairman.

A Member requested that she receive an update on action being taken in response to the petition for a safe crossing in Eastcourt Lane, Twydall for children and parents walking to and from schools.

The Assistant Director Front Line Services agreed to respond to the Member direct.

Decision:

The Committee:

- a) noted the petition response and appropriate action set out in paragraph 3 of the report;
- b) noted the progress on the petition against the removal of secure motorcycle parking from the Commercial Road Car Park in Strood;
- c) noted that the Assistant Director Front Line Services will respond to the Member direct providing an update on action being taken in response to the petition for a safe crossing in Eastcourt Lane, Twydall for children and parents walking to and from schools.

457 Attendance of the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation

Decision:

The Committee noted that this item had been withdrawn from the agenda.

458 Employment Opportunities for 18 - 25 year olds (including apprenticeships) - Progress Report

Discussion:

The Skills and Employment Programme Manager introduced the report which set out an update on progress made against the recommendations of the Employment Opportunities for 18-25 Year Olds (including apprenticeships) Task Group, which had been agreed by Cabinet on 6 February 2018. He explained that the recommendations would be reflected in the Skills and Employment Plan, which was currently being drafted.

The Skills and Employment Programme Manager advised upon the work and membership of the Medway Skills Board, including a summary of the various stakeholders involved.

The Committee acknowledged the work that had been undertaken by the Task Group which had involved cross-party working.

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In response to questions, the Skills and Employment Programme Manager advised that:

- The Medway Trades Council would be added to the list of stakeholders included in the Medway Skills Board.
- No action had been taken on sending the letter to the Secretary of State for Education referred to at recommendation 9 on page 56 of the agenda as this action was obsolete following the Career Strategy being released in December 2017.
- He would soon be meeting with the Head of Human Resources to progress recommendation 16 concerning recruitment of graduates.
- An important part of the Skills and Employment Plan was the interaction with the Government's Disabled Confident Scheme which encouraged businesses to be disability confident.

The Committee also acknowledged the important part that the Innovation Park Medway had in attracting young entrepreneurs and innovative businesses to Medway.

Decision:

The Committee:

- a) thanked the Skills and Employment Programme Manager for the comprehensive update on the recommendations of the Employment Opportunities Task Group;
- b) noted the report and the following actions:
 - the Medway Trades Council will be added to the list of stakeholders for the Medway Skills Board;
 - the Skills and Employment Programme Manager will be meeting with the Head of Human Resources to progress recruitment of graduates;
 - a briefing note will be circulated setting out those Task Group recommendations which are now out of date or have been completed.

459 Council Plan Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2018/19

Discussion:

The Committee received a report setting out performance in Quarter 1 2018/19 for the key measures of success and projects relevant to this Committee.

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The following was discussed:

- **Delivering new homes - Removal of the Housing Revenue Borrowing Cap**

A Member referred a letter sent by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to local authorities setting out proposals for the removal of the Housing Revenue Borrowing Cap. This was welcome news and would enable Local Authorities to build houses.

The Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive confirmed receipt of the letter and advised that at this stage, the Government was sharing with local authorities the process that it planned to follow for the removal of the Housing Revenue Borrowing Cap.

He advised that this would enable the Council to continue its new build programme. He referred to the development at Centenary Gardens which included the largest local authority new build bungalow development in the Country and he suggested that if any Member had not had an opportunity to visit Centenary Gardens, a site visit could be arranged.

- **Cultural Programme - Chatham Intra**

A Member referred to Chatham Intra and spoke positively about the development of a creative quarter along the Lower High Street from Star Hill to Sun Pier.

In response, the Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive advised upon work undertaken to develop a creative quarter in this part of Chatham, building on the existing creative companies resident there and attracting new businesses and restaurants.

He advised that there was consideration as to whether Medway should make a future bid for City of Culture status, and if such a bid was to be progressed, the creative quarter and Chatham Intra would form an important part of the bid.

- **Public Realm and Street Scene - Draft Masterplan for the Esplanade and Jackson's Recreation Ground**

In response to a request for clarification, the Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that Victoria Gardens formed part of the Jackson's Recreation Ground landscape masterplan and he agreed to provide details of the Masterplan in a briefing note to all Members of the Committee.

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- **Chatham Intra – Concerns regarding the future of Anchorage House**

A Member referring to Chatham Intra, expressed concerns regarding the future of Anchorage House and sought an update from officers.

- **Community Clean-ups**

A Member sought clarification as to whether the reference to 17 Community Clean-ups on page 66 of the agenda included other clean-ups undertaken by scouting organisations and local businesses, such as McDonalds.

In response, the Head of Business Intelligence confirmed this was not the totality of clean-ups and drew attention to the additional, more detailed text on page 68 of the report which referred to 17 community clean-ups and a number of clean-ups by the Payback Team.

- **Gateway 1 report – Proposed outsourcing of street scene activity**

A Member referred to page 68 of the agenda and in particular referred to the Gateway 1 report scheduled to be considered by Cabinet on 23 October 2018 concerning the future provision of Street Scene Enforcement Agent Services. He expressed concern as to a neighbouring local authority's experiences with the private sector and fine enforcement.

He also questioned whether this would have an impact upon the Council's Community Wardens.

He suggested that this Committee should undertake pre-decision scrutiny of this contract before any tender is let if timescales permitted this.

The Assistant Director Front Line Services advised upon the proposed Gateway 1 contract and confirmed that this contract would be an enhancement to the work of the Community Wardens. She explained that Community Wardens did not undertake enforcement or issue Fixed Penalty Notices. She also confirmed that the Council would continue to undertake enforcement relating to flytipping.

If the scheme progressed to procurement, there would be a need for a clear contract specification and contract management.

A Member suggested that income from fine enforcement should be retained and re-invested in local services and that if this contract was to be let to an outside organisation, consideration be given to engaging a local company. The Assistant Director Front Line Services confirmed that officers would look at the possible use of local companies.

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A Member requested that the Committee's appreciation be extended to the Community Wardens for the work that they undertake.

- **Chatham Railway Station**

A Member referred to the regeneration work in Chatham Town Centre and expressed concern that Network Rail no longer planned to deliver the original planned improvements at Chatham Railway Station.

The Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive advised that this had been discussed at the Chatham Regeneration Board and officers were now engaged in ongoing discussions with Network Rail. He advised that there was a further funding stream available and officers were working with Network Rail with a view to accessing additional funding via this source.

- **Performance target setting**

In response to a question as to the level of targets set for performance monitoring, the Head of Business Intelligence confirmed that the Council Plan targets had been approved by the Council when the Plan was refreshed in February 2018.

- **NI 195a – Improved street and environmental cleanliness: Litter**

A Member referred to NI 195a and sought clarification as to whether the figures provided were correct.

In response, the Head of Business Intelligence confirmed that a detailed Briefing Note on this issue had been circulated on 21 February 2018 and was available on the Council's website.

- **Flytipping – Heat map**

A Member requested that the Committee be provided with a heat map identifying locations of incidents of flytipping in Medway. He referred to the introduction of charging by Kent County Council and stated that a heat map would help to identify if this action had had an impact on flytipping in areas of Medway close to the boundary.

The Head of Business Intelligence advised that data on flytipping would be available in the next few months and heat maps could be provided to Members to help indicate problem areas.

A Member referred to the cost to the Council of clearing flytipping and suggested that if the Council removed the charge for collecting bulky waste, the level of flytipping would be reduced, thus reducing the overall cost to the Council. He expressed concern that those individuals who

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were paying for the collection of bulky waste were, in effect paying twice if the Council was incurring costs to clear waste that had been flytipped.

- **NI 167 Average journey time along 5 routes across Medway
Congestion hotspots – update**

A Member referred to the Medway City Estate and sought information as to the date for provision of transport improvements at the roundabout at Medway City Estate.

The Head of Business Intelligence advised that the Council had recently undertaken an extensive consultation and engagement exercise and recommendations arising from this would be submitted to a Project Board for consideration. An update could be provided at a future date.

The Assistant Director Front Line Services also informed the Committee that works were in hand to install automated traffic signals at the entrance to Medway Tunnel following the success of the pilot scheme. The pilot scheme had reduced the congestion for vehicles exiting the Medway City Estate in peak hours.

- **Benchmarking and use of the Citizen's Panel**

A Member referred to benchmarking and the use of the Citizen's Panel to assess satisfaction levels and sought information as to why different sources were used to gauge satisfaction levels. He also requested information as to how the Citizen's Panel is formed.

The Head of Business Intelligence advised that the measures and targets set out within the Council Plan had been agreed by the Council in February 2018.

She explained that performance data was collated through a range of different sources including contract management, the National Highway Transport Surveys, Focus Groups and the Citizen's Panel.

The Citizen's Panel comprised local residents and the Council was currently in the process of recruiting to the Panel. As part of this recruitment campaign, officers would be seeking the assistance of Ward Councillors in encouraging individuals to join the Panel from their Wards.

- **Chatham Bus Station – Cigarette bins**

In response to a question, the Assistant Director Front Line Services advised that cigarette bins were now in place at Chatham Bus Station. She advised that the bins were an innovative design encouraging individuals to answer a question by placing their cigarettes in a certain part of the bin.

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The Assistant Director Front Line Service also informed the Committee that officers had worked with Arriva and other bus providers in encouraging their staff to dispose of their cigarette butts responsibly. In addition, the Council had worked with their staff to help them give up smoking.

A Member requested more information on the Litter Innovation Fund and the Assistant Director Front Line Services agreed to provide this information direct to the Member concerned.

- **Chatham Public Realm**

A Member requested the completion date for the works to the public realm in Chatham Town Centre.

The Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive advised that it was hoped that the works would be completed before Christmas but officers were mindful that works should not affect the Christmas trade.

- **Chatham Regeneration – The Brook Car Park**

A Member expressed concern as to the condition of The Brook Car Park in Chatham and sought information as to the future of the site.

In response, the Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive advised that officers were in discussion with the owners of The Pentagon concerning the car park.

Decision:

The Committee:

- a) noted that the Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive has offered Members a visit to Centenary Gardens should they wish to view this development;
- b) noted that that Victoria Gardens forms part of the Jackson's Recreation Ground landscape masterplan and that a Briefing Note on the Masterplan will be sent to all Members of the Committee;
- c) noted that when the latest flytipping information is next circulated to Members, such information will include a heat map setting out flytipping hotspots;
- d) noted that a further update on measures to improve journey times at the Medway City Estate will be included in the Quarter 3 Performance Monitoring Report;
- e) requested that the Committee's appreciation be extended to the Community Wardens for the work that they undertake within the community and also to the Manager and staff at McDonalds for their work in ensuring that the streets around their premises are kept litter free;

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- f) noted that discussion will take place between the Member concerned and officers concerning Anchorage House;
- g) noted that the Assistant Director Front Line Services will provide information to the Member direct on the Litter Innovation Fund.

460 Work programme

Discussion:

The Committee considered its work programme for the remainder of 2018/19.

It was noted that under the Petitions item, the Committee had requested that a report on the CCTV audit work stream 1 be reported to the Committee on 6 December 2018.

The Chairman requested that in the light of the earlier discussion on CCTV provision, the Six Monthly report on Medway Commercial Group Ltd be referred to this Committee on 6 December 2018 for consideration and that MCG be invited to attend. This was generally supported as it was considered that MCG should be accountable from an operational perspective.

A Member referred to the scrutiny of Medway Norse. He stated that whilst this required discussion at another level, he considered that there was merit in Medway Norse being scrutinised across all four Overview and Scrutiny Committees for those elements of their service that fell within the remit of each Committee. However, he recognised that this would be an issue for consideration after the local elections in May 2019.

Referring to the Gateway 1 report scheduled to be considered by Cabinet on 23 October 2018 concerning the future provision of Street Scene Enforcement Agent Services, a Member suggested that whilst it was not possible for this Committee to undertake pre-decision scrutiny owing to the timescales involved, prior to any contracts being signed, a report be submitted to this Committee on 6 December 2018 on the letting of this contract, lessons learnt from neighbouring authorities and why this work had to be outsourced.

The Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive advised that Gateway 1 related to the principle of letting this contract and therefore this could be referred to this Committee for consideration before contracts were signed.

Decision:

The Committee:

- a) noted the current work programme and requested that at the next pre-agenda meeting, consideration be given to the work programme and in particular the Committee's request for the following additional reports to be added to the work programme for the meeting on 6 December 2018:

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- A report on the CCTV Audit – work stream 1.
 - The six monthly report from Medway Commercial Group Ltd following its consideration by Cabinet on 20 November 2018.
 - A report on Gateway 1 - Future provision of Street Scene Enforcement Agent Services;
- b) noted that the attendance of the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation had yet to be re-scheduled for 2018/19.

Chairman

Date:

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