Medway Council

Meeting of Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview And Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 6 December 2018

6.30pm to 10.40pm

Record of the meeting

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

Present: Councillors: Bhutia (Vice-Chairman), Carr, Etheridge

(Chairman), Griffin, Hicks, Osborne, Paterson, Shaw, Stamp,

Tejan and Williams

Substitutes: Councillors:

Steve Iles (Substitute for Mrs Josie Iles)

Opara (Substitute for Saroy)

In Attendance: Richard Hicks, Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and

Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive James Brown, Head of Regulatory Services

Laura Caiels, Legal Advisor

Ruth Du-Lieu, Assistant Director, Front Line Services Councillor Adrian Gulvin, Portfolio Holder for Resources

Mark Lawson, Environmental Services Manager

Councillor Rupert Turpin, Portfolio Holder for Business

Management

Sarah Valdus, Head of Environmental Services

Phil Watts. Chief Finance Officer

Ellen Wright, Democratic Services Officer

Representatives of the Community Safety Partnership

Councillor Adrian Gulvin – Chairman Chief Inspector Rob Marsh – Kent Police

Mick Jackson – Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Service

Paula Wilkins - Chief Nurse, NHS Medway Clinical

Commissioning Group

Aeilish Geldenhuys – Representing the Director of Public Health

Cynthia Allen – Kent, Surrey and Sussex Community

Rehabilitation Company

Neil Howlett – Community Safety Partnership Manager

Representatives from Medway Commercial Group Ltd Ian Price – CEO Vikram Sahdev – Director MCS Mo Olatuja – Company Secretary and Solicitor Jathinder Narwan – Operations Director

586 Chairman's Announcements

At the commencement of the meeting, the Committee held a minute's silence in memory of former Councillor Janice Bamber who had recently passed away. Janice Bamber had been a long standing member of both Medway Council and the former Rochester Upon Medway City Council.

587 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Josie Iles and Saroy.

588 Record of Meeting

The record of the meeting held on 18 October 2018 was agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The Chairman drew attention to Minute 459 (Council Plan Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2018/19) and the paragraph concerning Flytipping - Heat map and reminded the Committee that the majority of the costs incurred by the Council for the removal of flytipping related to commercial not bulky waste.

589 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

590 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

There were none.

Other interests

Councillors Carr and Steve Iles declared interests in the Annual Scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership on the basis that they both serve as Council representatives on the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority and advised the Committee that whilst they would remain as part of the Committee

for this item, they would not ask any questions of the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority.

591 Annual Scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership, including an update on the Community Safety Plan 2016 to 2020

Discussion:

The Chairman welcomed the partners of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to the meeting.

The Committee discussed the following topics:

• Crime statistics for Medway - In response to a question concerning the 35.7% increase in the level of recorded crime in Medway, Chief Inspector Marsh informed the Committee that following a Crime Data Integrity Inspection, changes had been made to the way crimes were recorded. Where previously there would have been one crime report per incident which covered all elements, under the new procedure individual elements were required to be assigned an individual crime report. Therefore, although the number of crime incidents may not have increased, the number of crime reports related to the incidents would have increased.

In addition, as a result of recent cases in the media surrounding sexual exploitation and historic child abuse cases, this had led to an increase in the reporting of this type of crime and through the work of the various agencies involved, there had been a higher level of reporting of domestic abuse, which for many years had largely remained hidden.

Chief Inspector Marsh stated that it was likely that as the new recording procedure became established, there would be a plateau effect over the coming years.

- Levels of anti-social behaviour in Medway In response to the statement that the number of incidents of antisocial behaviour (ASB) continued to fall in Medway, a Member expressed concern that this decrease could be attributed to people failing to report incidents. In response, Chief Inspector Marsh confirmed that from the crime reporting received on a daily basis, he was confident that people were continuing to report incidents of ASB. He referred to the various methods by which individuals could report crimes.
- ASB Team A Member paid tribute to the work of the Council's ASB
 Team and questioned whether there were plans to expand this team at a
 future date. In response, the Chairman of the CSP advised that ideally
 he would like to expand the team but funding was not currently available.
 He advised that he was currently exploring the possibility of sourcing
 increased funding via other agencies.

- Policing of Town Centres In response to concerns as to the visibility
 of Police Officers in Town Centres, Chief Inspector Marsh advised that
 specific funding was not available for the provision of Police Officers
 dedicated to Town Centres. However, in recognition of the benefit of
 having Police Officers within Town Centres, Officers had been deployed
 to Town Centres from other areas of Medway. In addition, PCSOs were
 also available to patrol town centres.
- Kent and Medway Gangs Action Plan A Member referred to the Kent and Medway Gangs Action Plan appended to the CSP Action Plan and congratulated the agencies on the work being undertaken. The Chairman of the CSP confirmed that bids for additional funding were being progressed.

Aeilish Geldenhuys outlined the approach taken by Public Health in working with schools to enable the delivery of training programmes by school staff to those pupils who were at risk of joining gangs. Cynthia Allen from the Community Rehabilitation Company confirmed that statutory agencies were working together on this issue.

Members expressed appreciation that the issue of 'gangs' had been taken on board and addressed by the CSP and stressed the importance of ensuring that gang related activity was not permitted to escalate.

 Social Isolation – In response to a question as to how the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Service progress the social isolation agenda, Mick Jackson advised that following a restructure in April, an officer had been designated responsibility for safeguarding and isolation.

He outlined the training put in place for Fire and Rescue staff and the ways in which staff could identify individuals who were of concern and refer them to other agencies for help and assistance.

• Inclusion of historical data in the CSP Plan – The Chairman of the CSP advised that the CSP Plan covered the period 2016 – 2020 and therefore some of the data included in the plan was historical. Appendix 2 provided the relevant information for 2018.

It was suggested that in future the appendices to the CSP report be reordered so that the strategic assessment is the first item.

- Additional Police Resources Chief Inspector Marsh informed the Committee that Kent Police were in the process of recruiting 200 additional Police Officers across Kent. However, they would require training before they were patrolling the streets.
- Update on rough sleepers In response to a question as to the work being undertaken to reduce the number of rough sleepers in Medway, the Chairman of the CSP confirmed that the CSP had been successful in

securing funding from a range of sources. As a result, a Rough Sleeper Coordinator had been engaged to link with partner agencies, existing support services and volunteer partners to agree a support plan for those known to be sleeping rough in Medway. He advised that to date approximately 40 rough sleepers had been re-housed and another 10 – 12 had been reconnected with their home areas.

He advised that a number of rough sleepers had drug, alcohol or mental health issues and advised that the CSP was now investigating a further scheme in conjunction with MHS to help these individuals.

He also referred to the work undertaken in Rochester Town Centre with local traders and residents to encourage individuals to support collections which direct funds to agencies providing assistance and support to rough sleepers.

He stated that there was no evidence that rough sleepers were being attracted into Medway as a result of the work being undertaken.

Decision:

The Committee thanked the various partners of the Community Safety Partnership for attending the meeting and:

- a) requested that in the future, the Strategic Assessment be placed as the first appendix to the CSP report.
- b) noted the findings of the strategic assessment.
- c) supported that, in light of the strategic assessment findings, the Community Safety Plan priorities remain unchanged.

592 Attendance by the Portfolio Holder for Resources

Discussion:

Members received an overview of progress made on the areas within the scope of the Portfolio Holder for Resources which fell within the remit of this Committee.

The Portfolio Holder responded to Members' questions and comments as follows:

• CCTV – In response to questions as to when he had first become aware of problems with the existing CCTV provision and that funding was not available to repair or replace cameras, the Portfolio Holder advised the Committee that he was first aware of the problems in May 2018 when the Council received a list from Medway Commercial Group Ltd (MCG) stating that a proportion of the cameras were no longer operational.

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However, at that time, he had been unaware that the responsibility for CCTV fell within his Portfolio as he had assumed that it was included under the remit of the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services. It was not until 2 months ago that he had been informed that CCTV fell within his own Portfolio. Upon establishing this, he had immediately initiated a meeting with the Assistant Director Front Line Services to review the situation and officers had since worked with MCG to undertake a comprehensive review of all CCTV cameras so as to assess those that were not operational.

He referred to the CCTV cameras in Twydall which had been the subject of a petition at the meeting of this Committee in October 2018 and confirmed that these cameras were now working.

Work was now underway concerning the remainder of the cameras that required attention.

In response to the question as to who was at fault, the Portfolio Holder advised that when MCG Ltd had been established, the client side had not been formally established but gave an assurance that this had since been rectified and the Head of Regulatory Services now had responsibility for the client side of the contract. In addition, as Portfolio Holder, he would continue to meet regularly with MCG until the situation had been resolved.

The Portfolio Holder expressed regret that the standard of service concerning provision of CCTV had fallen below that which was considered acceptable, but reassured the Committee that work was in hand to resolve this.

Some Members expressed concern that the Portfolio Holder had not been aware that the provision of CCTV fell within the remit of his Portfolio and requested whether the Portfolio Holder considered that he should resign from his position.

In response, the Portfolio Holder stated that he had been open and honest about the situation and he had no intention of resigning as Portfolio Holder. He stressed that now he was aware that he had responsibility for the provision of CCTV, he would be working with officers and MCG to ensure that action was taken to resolve the situation.

The Portfolio Holder confirmed that whilst the partners on the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) had assisted officers in identifying priority locations when undertaking a comprehensive review of the CCTV provision in Medway, the CSP had no responsibility for the provision of CCTV in Medway.

In response to a question as to the anticipated timeline for repairs and replacement of CCTV cameras, the Portfolio Holder advised that there

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was a 16 week mobilisation plan to complete the works. He further advised that there were currently over 400 CCTV cameras across Medway and officers were initially establishing those locations where cameras were considered necessary and those locations where CCTV cameras were no longer required and could therefore be removed. This would enable some cameras to be reused and moved to higher priority locations.

In the long term, having regard to the Council's Smart agenda, officers would be investigating upgraded technology and how this could assist with the provision of CCTV.

- Community Wardens A Member congratulated the Community
 Wardens on their work and requested that the Committee's appreciation
 be extended to them. In response, the Portfolio Holder advised that
 Community Wardens fell within the remit of the Portfolio Holder for
 Business Management, but he would pass on the Committee's
 comments.
- Bid to Home Office Knife Crime Fund A Member sought an update on the successful bid to the Home Office Knife Crime Fund by St Margaret's Church in Rainham which would provide mentor training, provision for junior school assemblies and promotion around the CrimeStoppers Fearless Campaign for Young People. In response, the Portfolio Holder advised that the Community Safety Team had met with Rev Nathan Ward to ensure a joined up approach and to support his work and he agreed to provide a briefing note to the Committee outlining the work being undertaken.

Decision:

The Committee:

- a) agreed that a briefing note be circulated providing an update on the work of the Community Safety Team and Rev Nathan Ward following the successful bid to the Home Office for funding from the Knife Crime Fund.
- b) noted that the Portfolio Holder for Resources will pass on the Committee's appreciation to the Portfolio Holder for Business Management for the work undertaken by the Community Wardens and ask him to convey this to the officers involved.

593 Update on CCTV Audit

Discussion:

The Committee received a report outlining the background to the provision of CCTV in Medway and it was noted that there was no statutory requirement for a local authority to provide CCTV.

It was confirmed that whilst Medway Commercial Group Ltd (MCG) was now responsible for the delivery of CCTV, which involved the repair and maintenance of existing stock but not replacement, ownership of CCTV cameras remained with the Council.

The Committee was advised that in December 2016, the condition of the camera stock had been noted and further updates provided at meetings of the Community Safety Partnership Strategic Executive Group, including in May 2018 when it had been noted that there were a number of cameras that required decommissioning. MCG had advised that they had taken stock of Medway's CCTV cameras and would pass the data onto the Council so that MCG and the Council could undertake a review.

Upon receipt of information from MCG, the Council's Community Safety Team commenced a review of all 442 cameras owned by the Council of which 75% were noted as operational. By focusing on the 25% of cameras that were not operational, it was possible to prioritise repairs and replacements and identify CCTV requirements across Medway.

The CCTV camera audit had focused on cameras in public spaces and specifically retail environments, transport hubs and areas of the night time economy but did not include cameras located in specific areas e.g. waste recycling sites, individual buildings and Medway Tunnel. The results of the audit were appended to the report at appendix 1.

The Committee received an update on Workstream 1 and it was noted that whilst some CCTV cameras were not working and were beyond economic repair, other issues related to the failure of the pan/tilt/zoom feature, outdated hardware with parts no longer available, interference due to network connectivity and consistency of power supply. In addition, MCG advised that the fibre network in Gillingham and Rainham was in need of a full review due to the maintenance of the network no longer being supported by the provider.

It was confirmed that whilst 5 cameras had required replacement in Twydall and this work had been completed on 23 November 2018 ahead of the agreed timescale, it was possible that operational issues could occur in Twydall due to the intermittent power supply defects.

Workstream 1 of the review was scheduled to be completed by December 2018 and options for funding were currently being considered, including the use of Capital reserves and Section 106 contributions.

Workstream 2 involved a plan for red and amber cameras and delivery was dependent upon costs and timescales received from MCG as well as securing funding.

Workstream 3 could run concurrently and would involve looking at the wider long term strategy with Workstream 4 identifying further funding to implement Workstream 3.

The Committee welcomed representatives from MCG Ltd who had attended the meeting to answer questions relating to CCTV provision.

In response to questions, MCG supplied further information as to the reasons why some of the CCTV cameras were no longer working or were not fully operational. It was noted that some of the CCTV stock had been in place since 1998. Whilst some cameras were no longer recording, a number were continuing to record but had been included within the number of non-operational cameras as the camera unit failed to move and was not therefore fulfilling its required function.

MCG confirmed that when the provision of CCTV had been transferred from the Council to MCG in 2016 a condition survey had been undertaken and 100% of cameras had been fully operational. However, the Control Centre equipment had required updating. In the light of this information, Members questioned the reasons why there had been such a rapid decline in the condition of the CCTV camera stock since being transferred to MCG two years ago. A MCG representative highlighted the age of the CCTV camera stock and the fact that technology had progressed since 1998 when some of the cameras had first been installed.

MCG confirmed that in its first two years of operating the CCTV contract, funding had been directed towards replacement of the Control Centre equipment in the first year and the replacement of recording equipment in the second year.

MCG stressed that where possible, cameras were repaired using existing parts from other redundant cameras but the provision of new replacement cameras did not form part of the contract and was not therefore the responsibility of MCG.

MCG confirmed that in operating the CCTV contract for the Council, MCG was required to comply with the Home Office Surveillance Camera Code of Practice. Under this Code of Practice, if a CCTV camera was not reporting a required level of activity, MCG was required to report the CCTV camera for decommissioning.

The Committee discussed the report and the information provided by MCG and concern was expressed as to the lack of funding provision by the Council for the replacement of CCTV cameras. In addition, there was concern that the Council had been paying MCG to operate a fully operational CCTV service and yet a proportion of the cameras were not functioning.

In response, the Head of Regulatory Services advised that officers and MCG were committed to resolving the issues concerning the provision of CCTV and were working closely on this issue.

Some Members expressed concern as to the set-up and operation of the CCTV contract, the lack of dialogue between the client and contractor and the apparent lack of accountability. Concern was expressed that MCG were

claiming that they had reported the incidents of CCTV cameras becoming nonoperational and yet Council officers claimed to be unaware of the scale of the issue until May 2018.

In response to the comments concerning the setting up of MCG as an Alternative Delivery Model, the Director for Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive outlined the background to the setting up of MCG Ltd and advised that when the CCTV service had transferred to MCG, those Council officers managing the service had also transferred to the company. He drew attention to the comments from MCG representatives on the operation of the contract over the past two years and the investments made by MCG. However, it was clear that the infrastructure of the CCTV cameras had remained the responsibility of the Council with MCG being responsible for repairs and maintenance of the equipment. He stressed that the Council had a wide range of assets and limited funding available and no specific funding had been set aside for the replacement of CCTV camera stock.

In response to questions as to the lessons learnt, MCG re-iterated that it was now working closely with relevant officers at the Council to resolve the issues and identify a way forward.

A Member suggested that consideration should be given to the inclusion of a regular standing report on this Committee's work programme holding MCG to account.

Decision:

The Committee:

- expressed appreciation to both officers and MCG representatives for attending the meeting and answering Members' questions on the provision of CCTV.
- b) requested that MCG provide copies of the information that it supplied to the Council in 2017 on the condition of the CCTV camera stock so that this could be circulated to the Committee.
- c) agreed that consideration of a progress report on Workstreams 1 and 2, further reports on Workstreams 3 and 4 and the future scrutiny of MCG be deferred until consideration of the Committee's work programme later on the agenda.

594 Medway Commercial Group Ltd Six Monthly Report

Discussion:

The Chairman suggested that there should be no discussion on this item as there had been a detailed discussion of MCG related issues under the previous item.

Decision:

The Committee agreed that in the light of the discussion on CCTV under the previous item, involving representatives from MCG Ltd. there should be no discussion on this item.

595 Draft Capital and Revenue Budget 2019/20

Discussion:

The Committee received a report providing an update on progress towards setting the Council's draft capital and revenue budgets for 2019/20.

The report set out the process by which the budget would progress through to Cabinet and Council in February 2019.

The Chief Finance Officer addressed those areas where there had been budget pressures in 2018/19 and those where there had been a shortfall in income levels.

The Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive advised upon the measures currently being taken to reduce income shortfalls.

In response to a question as to how the Council would react to a downturn in the economy, the Chief Finance Officer advised that he was not planning any further draw upon Reserves. However, he appreciated that fluctuations in the financial market were currently difficult to forecast.

Decision:

The Committee noted that Cabinet has instructed officers to continue to work with Portfolio Holders in formulating robust proposals to balance the budget for 2019/20 and beyond.

596 Street Scene Enforcement Procurement

Discussion:

The Committee received a report detailing additional information requested by the Committee on 18 October 2018 concerning the outsourcing via procurement of the Street Scene Environment Services covering fixed penalty notices (FPN's) for littering, dog fouling and dog control orders.

It was noted that the primary driver for outsourcing the service was so that the anti-social behaviours of littering and dog fouling could be addressed by a

dedicated team with the ability to be flexible in working locations and hours worked at zero cost to the Council.

The Committee sought an assurance that those individuals operating the contract would receive appropriate training so as not to be over-zealous in issuing tickets. The Head of Environmental Services confirmed that the emphasis of the contract would be to educate individuals and this would also be the subject of a wider programme of promotion.

In response to questions as to the process by which prosecutions would be handled in the event of non-payment of a FPN, the Environmental Services Manager advised upon the process that would be followed and confirmed that each officer would be required to write up statements at the end of the day for those cases where an individual had refused to pay a FPN. Such statements would be used, should the case proceed to prosecution.

The Environmental Services Manager also responded to concerns as to the safety of those individuals issuing FPN's and confirmed that all employees would be required to undergo appropriate training and would wear Medway Council-branded clothing.

Decision:

The Committee noted the report.

597 Council Plan Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 2 2018/19

Discussion:

The Committee received a report setting out performance in Quarter 2 for 2018/19 for the key measures of success and projects relevant to this Committee.

The Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive highlighted areas within the report and advised that the planning application for Whiffens Avenue was due to be submitted to the Planning Committee in February 2019.

The following was discussed:

 ECD13, LRCC4a and NI167 New - Short term and long term trends against targets – A Member referred to the short and long term trends against targets under Appendix 2 (Maximising Regeneration and Economic Growth) and questioned how these measures could be classified as green when almost all showed a downward trend.

The Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive advised that this issue was being monitored by the Corporate Management Team in identifying achievable targets.

- New measure Medway's economy as a whole The Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive clarified that this was a new measure and therefore the target had yet to be determined.
- NI 154 Net additional homes provided A Member referred to the Council's adopted housing target of 1000 homes a year and asked why this figure was not reflected in the measure. In response, the Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive stated that whilst the Council had a desired target, and the Council could facilitate the delivery of housing through the planning process, the Council was reliant upon developers to build houses.
- Chatham Railway Station A Member welcomed the works undertaken at Chatham Railway Station and asked why the widening of the steps could not be undertaken until a future date. In response the Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that work was in hand to seek funding for these additional improvement works and improving disabled access.
- NI 167 NEW Average journey times along 5 routes across Medway

 In response to comments as to this measure and how it relates to areas of congestion in Medway at peak periods, the Director Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive reminded the Committee that all major cities struggled with congestion at busy peak periods and this was a challenge when individuals preferred to travel by car. He confirmed that the Council was continuously seeking external funding when funding opportunities arose, and a number of schemes were planned to relieve congestion.

Decision:

The Committee noted the Quarter 2 performance of the measures of success used to monitor progress against the Council's priorities.

598 Petitions

Discussion:

The Committee received a report advising of those petitions received by the Council, which fell within the remit of the Committee, including a summary of the responses sent to the petition organisers by officers. No petitions had been referred to the Committee for consideration by the lead petitioners.

Attention was drawn to one petition where the lead petitioner had requested that the petition be referred for consideration by this Committee, but had agreed to defer the referral until after a site meeting with the Assistant Director Front Line Services and Ward Councillors. Subject to the outcome of the site visit it

was possible that this petition may be referred for consideration at the next meeting on 22 January 2019.

Decision:

The Committee noted the petition response and appropriate officer action set out in paragraphs 3 and 4 of the report.

599 Work programme

Discussion:

The Committee considered its work programme for the remainder of 2018/19 and the Democratic Services Officer provided an update on two items.

In addition, she referred to two items requested to be included on the work programme arising from discussion at this meeting.

Decision:

The Committee:

- a) agreed that the report on the Member's Item concerning parking in Gillingham North and South Wards be circulated via a briefing note.
- b) noted that the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation has accepted an invitation to attend the meeting of the Committee on 28 March 2019 to be held to account.
- c) requested that a report providing an update on the CCTV Workstream Phases 1, 2 and 3 be included on the agenda for the meeting on 28 March 2019, it being accepted that this report may not include a full detailed update.
- d) agreed that MCG be invited to a future meeting of the Committee for further scrutiny with the date to be discussed at the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee pre-agenda meeting.

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Date:

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