

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

**Thursday, 3 December 2020**

**6.30pm to 10.30pm**

**Record of the meeting**

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

- Present:** Councillors: Browne, Fearn, Sylvia Griffin, Andy Stamp, Thompson, Tranter and Williams
- Substitutes:** Councillors:  
Osborne (Substitute for Curry)
- In Attendance:** Councillor Adrian Gulvin, Portfolio Holder for Resources  
Richard Hicks, Director of Place and Deputy Chief Executive  
Peter Appleton, Interim Assistant Director Culture and Community  
James Brown, Head of Regulatory Services  
Laura Caiels, Principal Lawyer - Place Team  
Paul Cowell, Head of Culture and Libraries  
Katey Durkin, Head of Finance Strategy  
Neil Howlett, Community Safety and Enforcement Manager  
Lucy Kirk, Environmental Protection Team Leader  
Anna Marie Lawrence, Head of Business Intelligence  
Sarah Valdus, Head of Environmental Services  
Ellen Wright, Democratic Services Officer
- Representatives of the Community Safety Partnership** Councillor Adrian Gulvin – Chairman  
Chief Inspector Ian Dyball – Kent Police  
David Read – Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Service  
Sarah Vaux – NHS Medway Clinical Commissioning Group  
Aeilish Geldenhuys – Head of Public Health  
Cynthia Allen – Kent, Surrey and Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company  
Andrew Willetts – Head of Partnership Commissioning, Resources and Youth Justice

**466 Appointment of Chairman**

**Discussion:**

In the absence of the Chairman and Vice Chairman, the Committee was requested to appoint a Chairman for this meeting.

**Decision:**

Councillor Fearn was elected Chairman for this meeting.

**467 Appointment of Vice Chairman**

**Discussion:**

In the absence of the Vice Chairman, the Committee was requested to appoint a Vice Chairman for this meeting.

**Decision:**

Councillor Tranter was elected Vice Chairman for this meeting.

**468 Apologies for absence**

During this period, due to the Coronavirus pandemic, it was informally agreed between the two political groups to run Medway Council meetings with a reduced number of participants. This was to reduce risk, comply with Government guidance and enable more efficient meetings. Therefore, the apologies given reflects that informal agreement of reduced participants.

Apologies for absence were received from the Chairman Councillor Etheridge, the Vice Chairman Councillor Bhutia and Councillors Carr, Curry, Hubbard and Mahil.

Apologies for absence were also received from Ruth Dulieu, Assistant Director Front Line Services and Dawn Hudd, Assistant Director Regeneration.

**469 Record of Meeting**

**Decision:**

The record of the meeting held on 15 October 2020 was agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

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

There were none.

**471 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Significant Interests and Whipping**

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

There were none.

Other interests

Councillor Tranter referred to the annual scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership and informed the Committee that as a Council appointed representative on the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority, whilst he would participate in the debate on this item, he would not take part in any scrutiny of the performance of the Fire Authority.

**472 Annual Scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership including an update on the Community Safety Plan 2020 - 2024**

**Discussion:**

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

The Committee discussed the following topics:

- **Covid-19 pandemic enforcement concerning business compliance and wearing of face masks** – In response to a question concerning enforcement action against non-compliance with Covid-19 rules, the Head of Regulatory Services confirmed that his teams worked closely with the Police on enforcement and he provided a breakdown of the number and type of enforcement actions undertaken to date. This included 14 prohibition notices, 137 voluntary closures of non-compliant premises, 6,503 visits/engagements and the issue of 9 internet take down notices for prohibitive businesses.

He advised that Trading Standards were unable to enforce the wearing of face masks in places such as supermarkets.

Chief Inspector Dyball confirmed that the Police followed up complaints concerning non compliance with Covid-19 rules and undertook home visits where necessary. He advised that if an individual was unable to wear a face mask due to a medical condition or disability, they could wear a sunflower lanyard to indicate this to others.

- **The impact of Covid-19 on Mental Health** - In response to a question concerning the impact on mental health of the Covid-19 pandemic, Andy

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Willetts (Youth Services), Sarah Vaux (NHS CCG) and Aeilish Geldenhuys (Public Health) outlined the existing and additional workstreams and services put in place within their services for young people and within health services.

- **Changes to the structure of the CCG following the STP transformation and lessons learnt** – Sarah Vaux (NHS CCG) confirmed that the eight Kent and Medway CCG's came together on 1 April 2020 to form the Kent and Medway CCG just as the Covid-19 pandemic was taking hold. She confirmed that functions had changed through the months of the pandemic and there had been a period of catch up through the Summer and a push for increased digitalisation and joint working.
- **Re-organisation and transition of the Probation Service** – In response to a question as to the reorganisation of the Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) and whether the Service's website would be re-branded as a result of the re-organisation, Cynthia Allen (CRC) advised that the service continued to be operated by the private company Seetec until the contract end in June 2021. Work was underway in collaboration with the National Probation Service to ensure a smooth transition at the end of the contract.
- **Recording of crime statistics** – Chief Inspector Dyball advised that statistics could be interpreted in different ways and the Police avoided placing targets in plans as the Police was not a target driven organisation. He confirmed that crime statistics were submitted monthly to the Government and he was pleased to report that Kent Police had been graded outstanding by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) for its crime data integrity.

He drew attention to the crime statistics referred to in the report for the last financial year and provided an update as to the crime statistics for the rolling year specifically, as they related to recorded crime during the Covid-19 pandemic. He advised that there had been a general reduction in the levels of recorded crime through this period but reminded the Committee that double recording of crimes now meant that a crime was not necessarily recorded as one incident but also in the wider context.

Chief Inspector Dyball drew attention to a number of areas where there had been a reduction in reported crime including a 20% reduction in robbery, 28% reduction in home burglaries and a 27% reduction car crime. It was considered that some of these reductions could be as a direct result of people working from home during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the number of calls to the 999 and 101 service and electronic communication had remained constant and there had been an increase in issues concerning mental health.

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- **Police absences due to the Covid-19 pandemic** - In response to a question as to the level of police absence due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Chief Inspector Dyball advised that as at early December, the pandemic had resulted in approximately 2.3% absence of police officers and 8% absence of support staff.

He informed the Committee that the HMICFRS had undertaken a inspection of Police support services for staff during the pandemic and the Police as an organisation had been found to be exemplary in the way that it had managed Covid-19 and supported its staff whilst maintaining an efficient service throughout the period.

- **Anti Social Behaviour staffing levels** - The Committee expressed concern regarding the reduced level of staff within the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour team. In response, the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Chairman of the Community Safety Partnership advised that due to officers taking up posts elsewhere, three vacancies had arisen in the team. He confirmed that during the Summer, traveller/unauthorised encampment work had been absorbed by the Enforcement team and recruitment to one of the other vacant posts was now being progressed. Unfortunately, recruitment to the remaining vacant post had been deferred due to the moratorium but it was hoped that once the moratorium was lifted this second post would be filled.

He also confirmed that there was another post specifically covering Chatham Town Centre which had been funded by Section 106 funding and as this officer had been temporarily redeployed through the Covid-19 lockdown the funding had been extended to January 2022. He advised that once this funding stream ceased, it was intended that the post would continue to be funded either through further Section 106 funding or via Medway Development Company.

Chief Inspector Dyball informed the Committee of the importance of reporting anti social behaviour so that the Police could ensure that resources could be appropriately allocated. He confirmed that Kent Police had recruited additional Police Officers and PCSO's during the Covid-19 pandemic so that they could tackle anti social behaviour. In addition, there were dedicated Youth Officers and an additional 10 Police officers designated to work with schools.

Chief Inspector Dyball also expressed a wish for communities to assist the Police by taking an active role in the Police Speedwatch campaign.

- **Operation of the Community Payback scheme during the Covid-19 pandemic** - In response to a question, Cynthia Allen (CRC) confirmed that the Community Payback Scheme had been suspended nationally during the first Covid-19 lockdown. Staff had been diverted to other activities including additional support for the support line advisory service on the CRC website.

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After the initial lockdown, the Community Payback Scheme was able to re-commence at 92% of the pre-lockdown hours (436 hours per week) and was the highest performing Community Payback Scheme nationally. Under the current lockdown, the scheme had reduced to 60%, providing approximately 285 hours per week. Cynthia Allen advised that many of the Community Payback Schemes were located within charity shops which were now closed but the Gillingham Street Angels continued to be operational.

Group projects were operating at 60% and a number of new projects were planned at allotments, Fort Amherst, Medway Foodbanks, Wayfield Primary School and Community Centres.

- **Concerns as to the physical and mental wellbeing of staff within services during the Covid-19 pandemic** - The Committee expressed concern as to the physical and mental health of staff working within the Partnership's services during the Covid-19 pandemic and asked what measures were in place to ensure that services had resilience to cope.

Chief Inspector Dybal advised that physical assaults on Police Officers were isolated incidents but when they did occur, the assailants were prosecuted. He advised that Kent Police had been recognised by the HMICFRS as a leader in the provision of staff welfare.

David Read (Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Service) informed the Committee that within the Fire and Rescue Service there was a good support structure for staff particularly around mental health and regular contact was made with those corporate staff who were working from home. There had been 2% sickness during the summer months.

Sarah Vaux (NHS CCG) advised that within the health service there was an emphasis on the mental health and well-being of staff. However, she advised that since the commencement of the second lockdown, staff were getting tired and working above their contracted hours and were therefore being encouraged to take regular breaks. She advised that over the Christmas/New Year break, it was likely that many international staff would want to take long breaks to return to their families and this was currently under discussion.

Aeilish Geldenhuys, Head of Public Health advised that there was a great level of support from the Leader of Medway Council, the Chief Executive and the Council's Human Resources Department to provide support for staff and ensuring that they were aware of the support services available. Managers were being encouraged to keep in contact with those either working from home, working on the front line or in a redeployed role.

- **Stakeholder engagement on the Community Safety Plan** – In response to a question as to how the pandemic had affected stakeholder engagement on the Community Safety Partnership's Community Safety

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Plan, the Chairman of the Community Safety Partnership, Councillor Gulvin advised that whilst it had not been possible to hold the annual stakeholder engagement event in 2020, consideration was currently being given as to how to stage the event in 2021, either as a physical event or online.

- **The appointment of a fulltime Hospital Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (HIDVA)** - In response to a question as to the length of term for the post of the full time Hospital Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (HIDVA) appointed in January 2020, Sarah Vaux (NHS CCG) advised that the post had been extended to March 2021. In the meantime, the CCG were putting together a document in recognition as to how people seek urgent support and a model was emerging around emergency treatment centres and increased support in primary care but this was still being finalised. It was hoped that as a result of this work, a Health HIDVA Hub would be provided to support the Primary Care Urgent Treatment Centres as well as the Emergency Departments across Kent and Medway.

During the discussion, the Committee acknowledged that the Country was going through the biggest crisis that had faced the world as far back as anyone could remember and that the response of the various agencies had been extraordinary during this period. This built on the strength of the CSP which had been established prior to the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **Decision:**

The Committee thanked the Community Safety Partnership partners for attending the meeting and answering questions and:

- a) noted the findings of the strategic assessment.
- b) noted the refreshed CSP priorities in light of the strategic assessment findings.

### **473 Attendance by the Portfolio Holder for Resources**

#### **Discussion:**

The Committee 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:

- **Public Space Protection Orders** – In response to a question concerning the level of enforcement action under the Public Space Protection Orders, the Community Safety and Enforcement Manager advised that the number of tickets issued by the Council for dog related

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offences was low. As it was the Police that dealt with enforcement for alcohol and general anti social behaviour offences, this information would be supplied direct to the Member outside of the meeting.

- **CCTV monthly reports and thresholds for the provision of new CCTV cameras** - The Committee noted that a monthly report was generated by the CCTV control room listing activity levels on all CCTV cameras and requested that a copy of this monthly report be supplied to the Committee.

It was noted that if a Ward Councillor, member of the public or a Council officer considered that a location would benefit from the provision of a new CCTV camera, due to anecdotal evidence on increased activity in an area, this could be reported to the Community Safety team for investigation as set out within the report. However, there was a threshold which was required to be met before a CCTV camera could be provided and it was stressed that if a CCTV camera was provided, should the camera show no activity, Information Commission rules required that the camera be removed as CCTV cameras were not permitted to be used as a preventative measure.

The Committee requested that information as to the CCTV camera threshold be circulated outside of the meeting.

- **Medway Task Force** - Referring to the work of the Medway Task Force in both Luton and Wayfield and Gillingham North Wards, it was noted that both projects had provided positive results and the Committee sought information as to whether this work could be expanded to other parts of Medway.

In response, the Portfolio Holder referred to the successful award of £111,000 from the Home Office Safer Streets Fund for specific use in the residential area north of Gillingham High Street and advised that the Medway Task Force continued to investigate other funding opportunities. Meanwhile, the Task Force also continued its work in Luton.

He advised that it would not be possible to expand the work of the Task Force across the whole of Medway as the Task Force was specifically aimed at dealing with specific areas in certain Wards where there were issues that needed to be addressed.

- **Support for the homeless** – The Committee sought an assurance that rough sleepers were receiving support and advice from the appropriate agencies and were not the subject of enforcement, particularly where they had set up a tent encampment.

In response, the Portfolio Holder advised that Medway's Housing Department and Public Health's Blue Light Project were continuing to work with vulnerable people and rough sleepers many of whom had a range of complex issues and therefore required intense interventions.

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During the first Covid-19 lockdown there was a specific drive to remove rough sleepers from the streets and re-locate them into accommodation where possible.

He advised that in the past, before the Housing First Policy was introduced, housing providers were only willing to accept homeless individuals with drug and alcohol dependence if they were prepared to sign up to a rehabilitation programme but this was no longer the case. However, there were still a small number of rough sleepers who did not want to be relocated into accommodation.

The Portfolio Holder also gave an assurance that rough sleepers who were in tent encampments were not treated by way of enforcement action in the same way as a traveller incursion.

The Committee requested that a briefing note on the work of the Blue Light Project be circulated to the Committee.

- **Environmental enforcement** – Referring to Appendix 1 to the Council Plan Performance Monitoring report, clarification was sought as to the number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued by the Council in comparison to other local authorities.

In response the Portfolio Holder informed the Committee that the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices was currently being carried out for the Council by a private company and approximately 90% had involved smoking and litter offences. It was confirmed that enforcement now included the Pentagon Shopping Centre.

Unfortunately, although the teams were active in enforcement, the fines levied by the Magistrates Court were at a low level and did not match the nuisance caused by the offenders.

The Portfolio Holder agreed to ask that the Community and Enforcement Safety Manager supply the Committee with information as to the Fixed Penalty Notices issued to date along with a copy of the recent report to the Procurement Board.

The Head of Business Intelligence referred to the Appendix to the Council Plan Performance Monitoring report and advised that this contained over two years of data on environmental enforcement. She advised that there had only been one successful prosecution in recent months due to the Courts being closed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, it was pointed out that, where possible, wardens try to act proactively with the offender before issuing a sanction and this could be the reason why this authority's level of issuing tickets may not be at the same level as other local authorities.

- **Illegal tobacco** - Clarification was sought as to the retail value of illegal tobacco seized as part of Operation Ignite in August. The Portfolio

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Holder agreed to check this outside of the meeting and advise Members of the correct valuation.

During discussion, the Portfolio Holder stressed the importance of receiving intelligence as to the identification of premises dealing in illegal tobacco so that enforcement action could be taken to remove sometimes poor quality tobacco from the market, especially as it could be more harmful to health than ordinary tobacco. He therefore agreed liaise with the Council's Communications Department to promote and encourage reporting of these premises.

- **Trade Waste** - The Committee noted that since the 5 September 2020 the Environmental Enforcement Team had been working with the Medway Task Force in Gillingham North area and had dealt with 393 jobs, details of which were broken down in paragraph 4.5 of the report. Clarification was sought as to whether it had been possible to obtain intelligence relating to the 9 trade waste violations as these had the potential to include hazardous waste and pollutants.

In response the Portfolio Holder agreed to ask officers to provide a detailed briefing note on this to the Committee.

### Decision:

The Committee:

- a) noted that officers in consultation with the Police will supply direct to the Member concerned information as to the enforcement action by Police under the Public Space Protection Orders relating to alcohol breaches and general anti social behaviour.
- b) requested that officers circulate a copy of the monthly report produced by MCG on the CCTV cameras.
- c) requested that a briefing note be supplied setting out the threshold for the provision of a CCTV camera.
- d) requested that a briefing note be supplied on the number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued by the private company along with a copy of the recent report to the Procurement Board
- e) noted that the Portfolio Holder will check the figure set out in paragraph 7.4 of the report relating to the value of illegal tobacco seized by Operation Ignite in August 2020.
- f) requested that a briefing note on trade waste violations be circulated to the Committee setting out what it involves and whether intelligence is helpful to identify offenders.

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- g) agreed that a briefing note be supplied on the work of the Blue Light Project.
- h) noted that the Portfolio Holder for Resources will speak to the Council's Communications Team concerning possible publicity for the reporting of illegal tobacco sources.

**474 Member's item - Public Space Protection Orders**

**Discussion:**

The Committee received a Member's item submitted by Councillors Osborne and Paterson concerning the recent extension of the existing Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) across Medway for a further 3 years. Councillor Osborne advised that the maps and boundaries of the individual Orders were out of date and in some cases did not take into account new developments and he requested that in future, Members be given the opportunity to review the maps for their Wards and an opportunity to suggest amendments and changes which they considered to be relevant.

Using maps of Rochester, Strood and Chatham which were displayed at the meeting, Councillor Osborne indicated those areas where he considered the Orders should be extended to cover in the future. He commented that other Ward Councillors may wish to suggest amendments to the areas covered by a PSPO in their individual Wards and requested that they be given an opportunity to comment.

The Head of Regulatory Services advised that prior to the recent 3 year extension of the PSPOs, they had been the subject of consultation with the Community Safety Partnership and the Portfolio Holder for Resources. He explained that as the PSPOs had been in place since 2017 and were the subject of renewal, existing maps had been used prior to the recent extension. However, as boundary amendments could be made at any time to an Order, he was willing to take any proposed amendments to the Community Safety Partnership for consideration.

Councillor Osborne thanked the Head of Regulatory Services for providing clarification and noted that other Councillors would have an opportunity to look at the PSPO boundaries in their Wards and make any suggested amendments.

**Decision:**

The Committee noted that as the extension of the existing Public Space Protection Orders had now been agreed, for any variation, discharge or extension the process into varying the Orders could commence in early 2021 which would include a longer and wider consultation, including with Members.

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### 475 Draft Capital and Revenue Budget 2021/22

#### **Discussion:**

The Committee received a report providing an update on progress towards setting the Council's draft capital and revenue budgets for 2021/22.

The report set out the process by which the budget would progress through to Cabinet and Council in February 2021.

The draft minute of the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee's consideration of the draft Capital and Revenue 2021/22 budget on 26 November 2020 had been circulated as a supplementary report.

The Committee questioned the reason for the significant difference in the forecast for 2021/22 for the Regeneration, Culture and Environment (RCE) Directorate to that contained previously in the Medium Term Financial Forecast published in September 2019. In response, it was confirmed that a number of functions had been transferred from the RCE Directorate to Business Support Directorate including ICT, Human Resources and Transformation and that this had been reflected in the reduction in the budget for the RCE Directorate for 2021/22. The Committee requested that it receive a detailed breakdown of the transferred functions outside of the meeting.

Referring to the Capital Budget, the Committee requested that it be supplied with a schedule setting out the Capital Programme expenditure outside of the meeting.

The Committee discussed the pressures upon the Directorate as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, not only related to increased costs but the loss of income. In response, the Head of Finance Strategy outlined the compensation scheme for local authorities that had been announced by the Government.

In response to a question concerning the income received from the sale of the Conservancy Building, the Director of Place and Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that the proceeds had been allocated to works at the Corn Exchange and the provision of a new Dickens exhibition at the Guildhall Museum.

The Head of Finance Strategy also explained the background to the projected levels of New Homes Bonus and Council Tax for 2021/22 as set out in Table 1 of the report. She informed the Committee that despite the Covid-19 pandemic, the collection of Council Tax had been reasonably steady and the Government had provided an assurance that any deficit could be recovered over a 3 year period rather than the usual one year period.

#### **Decision:**

The Committee:

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- a) noted that Cabinet has instructed officers to continue to work with Portfolio Holders in formulating robust proposals to balance the budget for 2021/22 and beyond.
- b) requested that the following additional information be supplied to the Committee:
  - a detailed breakdown of the functions transferred from the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Directorate to the Business Support Directorate.
  - a schedule setting out the projects included in the Capital Programme expenditure.

### 476 Medway Cultural Strategy 2020 - 2030

#### Discussion:

The Committee was requested to consider the proposed Medway Cultural Strategy ahead of it being submitted to Cabinet on 12 January 2021.

The Interim Assistant Director Culture and Community advised that the ten year Medway-wide partnership strategy was a shared ambition for the future, built on extensive engagement across Medway, demonstrating how important culture was to Medway's future and enabling everyone to have an opportunity to take part in or contribute to cultural life. A Member briefing on the Strategy had taken place on 20 October 2020.

The Strategy was a ground-breaking model creating a new way of partnership working that in the short term shaped opinions, actions and behaviours leading to social and economic benefits and in the longer term would positively transform Medway.

The Committee discussed the Strategy and in particular, the following:

- **The benefits of partnership working** – The Committee referred to the established working relationship of the partners involved in the Community Safety Partnership and stressed the importance of partnership working to underpin the Cultural Strategy and be prepared to respond as one body to funding opportunities as they arise.

The Head of Culture and Libraries advised that in the last week, the five Creative Medway Working Groups had come together for the first time and approximately 30 – 40 people had been involved in each. He considered that this indicated faith in the process of recreating and evolving the Strategy partnership at the core.

He confirmed the intention to have projects ready so that action could be taken to maximise possible funding opportunities.

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- **Lessons from other City of Culture bids** – In response to a query as to what lessons could be learnt from other City of Culture bids, the Interim Assistant Culture and Community advised that work was ongoing to assess and learn from other previous bids and in particular, the programme evaluation from Hull.

The Director of Place and Deputy Chief Executive stated that the innovation and level of engagement, especially with the Universities, was unique to Medway in comparison with engagement work undertaken elsewhere and he stressed that the involvement of the Universities played a central role to Medway's bid. He commended the Head of Culture and Libraries in the work that he had undertaken on ensuring a high level of engagement.

It was also confirmed that the Cultural Strategy would form the bedrock of Medway's bid for City of Culture.

- **Engagement** – Concern was expressed that due to the current Covid-19 restrictions, it would be challenging to ensure wide engagement and inclusivity.

In response, the Head of Culture and Libraries confirmed that one of the five Working Groups was the Community and Engagement Working Group and it would be the role of this Working Group to ensure that as many people as possible could be involved by the creation of a diverse range of cultural engagement and participation opportunities.

- **Increased reference to greenspaces and the outdoor environment** – The Committee suggested that the Strategy should have an increased emphasis on green spaces, the natural environment and the river particularly taking into account that in 2020, many people had been required to work from home and stay local and therefore were becoming increasingly reliant on the local outdoor environment. In response, the Head of Culture and Libraries confirmed that the creative sector would be using greenspaces as much as possible making them more accessible for culture and activities and this would be a feature of the Places and Spaces work stream.

It was suggested that opportunities be pursued for sponsorship for public art.

- **Support for the Medway Cultural Strategy** – It was noted that there was widespread support for the Medway Cultural Strategy across the Council and there had been positive responses from two Service Managers Workshops as to how their services could bring art and culture to everyday lives.

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### **Decision:**

The Committee recommended the adoption of Medway's new Cultural Strategy and Creative Medway governance and delivery model to Cabinet.

### **477 Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy - Formal Adoption**

#### **Discussion:**

The Committee was requested to give consideration to the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy ahead of it being considered by Cabinet on 12 January 2021.

The Strategy had been produced by Kent County Council following a public consultation carried out during July to September 2019 and Medway Council, along with other Kent local authorities had been invited to participate and respond as part of the consultation process.

Following the evaluation of comments received during the consultation process, a final draft Strategy had been produced with 10 high level priorities identified for action. The Strategy had been further reviewed and amended during May 2022 to account for Covid-19.

Local authorities across Kent were now being asked to take the strategy through their own internal process for formal adoption.

The Committee sought clarification as to why Kent and Medway had set a target of net-zero emissions by 2050 when other local authorities had set a shorter timescale. In response, the Environmental Protection Team Leader advised that when reviewing the Strategy, consideration had been given to setting the target for net-zero emissions at 2030, but Kent County Council had decided to retain the target at 2050.

The Head of Environmental Services confirmed that Medway officers were in the process of developing a separate Medway Climate Change Action Plan in discussion with the Climate Change Member Advisory Group which was scheduled for presentation to Cabinet in Spring 2021.

Referring to the priority actions, the Committee sought an assurance that the aspirations of the Strategy were supported across the Council and the Director of Place and Deputy Chief Executive gave an assurance that climate change was a corporate priority for the Council and there was a willingness to be involved across the Council. In addition, climate change formed an important part of the Council's bid for City of Culture.

#### **Decision:**

The Committee noted the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy prior to its submission to Cabinet on 12 January 2021 for formal consideration and adoption.

**478 Council Plan Performance Monitoring and Risk Register Review Quarter 2  
2020/21**

**Discussion:**

The Committee received a report setting out performance for Quarter 2 against the Council's two priorities Place and Growth insofar as they fell within the remit of this Committee.

The Head of Business Intelligence informed the Committee that in response to a request for additional contextual information to be provided, this had been included within the report at Appendix 1.

**Decision:**

The Committee noted the Quarter 2 2020/21 performance against the measures used to monitor progress against the Council's priorities.

**479 Petitions**

**Discussion:**

The Committee received a report advising of petitions received by the Council which fell within the remit of this Committee, including a summary of the response sent to the petition organisers by officers.

The Committee noted that the following two petitions had been referred to this Committee and would be considered at the next meeting on 14 January 2021:

- Petition to address issues relating to Dominos Pizza, Walderslade
- Petition for the installation of a warden operated gating system at the access in Cozenton Park from Cranford Close.

**Decision:**

The Committee noted the petition response set out in paragraph 3 of the report and the two petition referrals scheduled for January 2021.

**480 Work programme**

**Discussion:**

The Committee received a copy of its current work programme and was informed of items discussed at the pre agenda meeting on 5 November 2020.

**Decision:**

The Committee agreed:

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- a) that the Annual Review of Waste Contract report be moved back to its original date of March 2021 in light of the fact that the team will be busy throughout December with the preparations for the Christmas/New Year waste collections but requested that in future years the annual review report tie in closer to the contract start date and suggested that in 2021, the next update be in October and then annually in October thereafter.
- b) that a report on 20s Plenty be submitted to this Committee in January 2021.
- c) noted that a briefing note will be initially produced on the Lifecycle Report on the Highways Network with the proviso that any Member could request that the matter referred to this Committee as a report. Therefore, it was agreed that this remain on the outstanding reports list under 'Dates to be determined' until such time it is decided it can be removed.
- d) that a report on the partial cessation of the use of herbicides be brought to this Committee in January 2021.

**Chairman**

**Date:**

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