

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

**Thursday, 15 June 2023**

**7.02pm to 8.30pm**

**Record of the meeting**

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

**Present:** Councillors: Paterson (Chairperson), Field (Vice-Chairperson), Bowen, Cook, Fearn, Filmer, Hamilton, Hubbard, Hyne, Nestorov, Peake and Sands

**Substitutes:** Councillors:  
Brake (For Councillor Doe)  
Gulvin (For Councillor Etheridge)

**In Attendance:** Richard Hicks, Director of Place and Deputy Chief Executive  
Nicola Couchman, Democratic Services Officer  
Ruth Du-Lieu, Assistant Director, Front Line Services  
Sunny Ee, Assistant Director Regeneration  
Dee O'Rourke, Assistant Director, Culture & Community  
Samantha Beck-Farley, Chief Organisational Culture Officer  
Jon Pitt, Democratic Services Officer  
Councillor Adam Price, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services (including statutory responsibility)  
Jayne Webb, Parking Business Manager

**56 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Doe and Councillor Etheridge.

**57 Record of Meeting**

The record of the meeting held on 21 March 2023 and the record of the Joint Meeting of Committees held on 24 May 2023 were agreed and signed by the Chairperson as correct records.

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

There were none.

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

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

There were none.

Other interests

There were none.

**60 Petitions**

**Discussion:**

Members considered a report which advised the Committee of 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. One petition had been referred to the Committee for consideration. This related to parking in Baron Close, Gillingham.

The lead petitioner and Councillor Price as Ward Member were invited to speak to explain why the Council's response to the petition had been referred to the Committee. The following points were made:

- Residents in Pier Road were unable to park in front of their properties due to the topography and their only available parking and access by vehicle was at the rear of the properties on Baron Close.
- The available space for parking in Baron Close had been eroded by the number of dropped kerbs installed over recent years and this has impacted on residents some of whom were disabled.
- There are several garages in Baron Close and it was requested that a reduction in the number of garages be explored by looking at usage and size of the garages as this could assist in improving the availability of parking in Baron Close.

The Parking Business Manager informed the Committee that to date four dropped kerbs had been installed and whilst this had reduced the kerb space it had allowed the residents of those properties to park on the front of their properties rather than on the road.

The Assistant Director, Culture and Community confirmed that the garages were in decent condition and 12 of the 15 garages were currently being let. No further information about usage of these garages was currently available.

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In discussing the petition, the following responses were made to questions from Members:

Members were concerned about the lack of sufficient parking available particularly for disabled residents. Questions were also raised about the garages. It was proposed that a feasibility study should be undertaken. This would consider parking accessibility issues and the garages.

### **Decision:**

The Committee:

- a) Noted the petition responses and appropriate officer action in paragraph 3 of the report.
- b) Considered the petition referral request in paragraph 4 and the Director of Place and Deputy Chief Executive's response.
- c) Requested a feasibility study in relation to parking accessibility for residents on Baron Close and Pier Road, including a review of the use of the garages. This would be undertaken in consultation with ward councillors and the petitioner.

## **61 Council Plan Performance Monitoring Report and Strategic Risk Summary Quarter 4 2022/23**

### **Discussion:**

The Committee received a report setting out performance for Quarter 4 against the Council's two priorities Place and Growth insofar as they fell within the remit of this Committee, along with a review of the Council's Risk Register.

The following issues were discussed:

**Citizens' Panel** – In relation to the indicator showing satisfaction with parks and green spaces, Members commented on the composition and number of residents on the Citizens Panel. A Member said that it would also be useful to have a breakdown of the data by ward. Officers responded to explain that the Citizens' Panel is a standing group of individual residents in Medway, which could be used to gain feedback on particular issues and used a well-established methodology. It was suggested that a Briefing Note could be provided to set out further details.

**Street and environmental cleanliness** – A Member questioned the green rating of this indicator in view of the littered streets they had seen and asked how this indicator is measured. Officers explained that the process for monitoring cleanliness of streets was consistent with the national approach and was a snapshot. An offer was made to show Members the methodology used in further detail. Officers also explained that there could be a number of contributing factors that impacted on street cleanliness but that if Members reported areas of concern including any particular patterns of litter, then officers

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would look at these. Members acknowledged the role that they and residents could play in reporting any areas of concern to Front Line Services.

In response to a question regarding the timing of refuse collections and road sweeping and whether this aligned, officers responded to confirm that it generally did but they would look at the sequencing of road sweeping and refuse collections in more detail.

**Fly tipping and dog fouling enforcement** – It was asked why a low number of Fixed penalty Notices had been issued for dog fouling. Officers explained that it was very difficult to enforce as offenders must be caught in the act. A Member also suggested it would be useful to see the number of fly tipping incidents reported as well as sanctions used.

**S106 funded park improvements at the Esplanade and Jacksons Field** – The reason for the delay in receipt of the S106 payment was queried.

**Safe Spaces Scheme** – It was suggested that this should be expanded to the night-time economy and officers confirmed they are looking to expand this going forward.

**Anti-idling project** – In response to a question about why Rainham was chosen for the project officers would provide the rationale for this.

**Number of jobs created and safeguarded** – Officers were requested to provide data on the quality, sustainability, full time equivalent and levels of pay in relation to the Number of Jobs Created and Safeguarded (Cumulative) performance indicator.

**Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF)** – The potential withdrawal of the HIF funding was discussed, and officers clarified that no final decision had yet been taken by the Government. Representations were being made to Homes England and the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities to seek support for the funding not to be withdrawn.

**Priority Play Programme** – Context was provided regarding the allocation of £250k. In response to a query, it was explained that this was the absolute minimum needed to keep playgrounds open and safe and provided good value for money.

**Getting around Medway** – In response to a request for additional information on the average journey time along 5 routes across Medway measure, a briefing note on the metrics used and the 5 routes would be provided.

**Bus Service Improvement Plan** – Officers would provide a briefing note updating on progress in response to a request from a Member.

**Performance indicators, definitions and format** - With regards to the indicators included in the report, the opportunity to reframe the Council Plan was available to the new administration. The difference between short term

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and long-term trends was clarified for Members. A Member also requested a one-page summary collating all the relevant performance indicator codes for ease of reference.

### **Decision:**

The Committee:

- a) Noted the Q4 2022/23 performance against the measures used to monitor progress against the Council's priorities and considered the Strategic Risk Summary.
- b) Requested a briefing note on the Citizens Panel including a breakdown of the satisfaction data for parks and open spaces by ward.
- c) Requested that the sequencing of road sweeping and refuse collection schedules be looked at in more detail.
- d) Asked to receive a breakdown of data on the number of fly tipping prosecutions.
- e) Requested an update on the reason for the delay in receiving the S106 Funded Park Improvements funding relating to The Esplanade and Jacksons Field.
- f) Asked to receive the rationale for the selection of the location for the anti-idling project.
- g) Requested data on the quality and sustainability of the jobs created in relation to the Number of Jobs Created and Safeguarded (Cumulative) performance indicator.
- h) Requested a briefing note on progress regarding the Bus Service Improvement Plan and further information on the metrics and 5 routes used for the 'Getting around Medway' performance indicators.
- i) Requested a one-page summary collating all of the relevant performance indicators codes.

## **62 Work programme**

### **Discussion:**

The Committee received a report setting out the current work programme.

Members requested the addition of hyperlinks to the Briefing Notes listed in Appendices C, D and E.

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**Decision:**

The Committee:

Agreed the proposed work programme, set out in Appendix A to the report, including the addition of a report on Building Control Surveys, as set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report.

**Chairman**

**Date:**

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