

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

**Thursday, 10 February 2011**

**6.34pm to 7.55pm**

**Record of the meeting**

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

**Present:** Councillors: Andrews, Bhutia, Bright (Chairman), Godwin, Tony Goulden, Griffin, Hewett, Hicks (Vice-Chairman), Hubbard, Mackinlay and Ruparel

**Substitutes:** Councillor Baker for Councillor Maisey

**In Attendance:** Councillor Jane Chitty, Portfolio Holder for Strategic Development and Economic Growth  
Councillor Andy Stamp  
Robin Cooper, Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture  
Angela Drum, Head of Legal Services  
Stephen Gaimster, Assistant Director Development, Economy and Transport  
Mark Johnson, Principal Transport Planner  
Brian McCutcheon, Planning Policy and Design Manager  
Andy McGrath, Assistant Director, Front Line Services  
Caroline Salisbury, Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinator  
Ian Wilson, Head of Capital Projects, Road Safety and Networks  
Kevin Woolmer, Corporate Accountant

**787 Record of meeting**

The record of the meeting held on 21 December 2010 was agreed and signed by the Chairman as correct.

**788 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Crack and Maisey.

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

There were none.

## 790 Declarations of interest

Councillor Andrews declared a personal interest in agenda item 7 (Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and Flood Risk Regulations 2009) as he is the council's representative on the Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board.

Councillor Tony Goulden declared a personal interest in agenda item 6 (Local Transport Plan) as he is a council representative on the Rochester Bridge Trust.

Councillor Hicks declared a personal interest in agenda item 7 (Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and Flood Risk Regulations 2009) as he is the council's representative on the Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board.

## 791 Attendance of the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Development and Economic Growth

### Discussion:

The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Development and Economic Growth addressed the committee outlining some of the main achievements within several areas of her portfolio:

- Economic Regeneration and Social regeneration – unemployment had fallen in Medway by 20% since January 2010, with youth unemployment falling over 30% during the same time period which were notable figures in the current economic climate. The Employ Medway team had helped over 350 local unemployed people to find jobs and 8 loans (through the Partners for Growth scheme) had helped to create and protect 77 jobs. A total of 559 local jobs had also been created through the council's Seeds for Business Growth programme.
- Securing funding – over £1 million of EU and government funding had been secured to implement a programme of physical neighbourhood improvements in targeted areas with £15 million of EU funding secured in total.
- Innovation Centre – 175 business tenant jobs established at the centre.
- Tourism – is about business and the local economy and worth almost £300 million to Medway. Two new hotels were being built which were hugely important in helping future tourism. 2010 had seen a 15% increase in the recorded coach arrivals in Rochester and there had been only a slight drop in the visitor numbers to the Visitor Information Centre in 2010.
- South Thames Gateway (STG) Building Control Partnership - applications were down 13% but due to changes in legislation, income levels remained

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on track. A recent external audit of the joint service had shown that each of the three authorities which make up the partnership had saved £43,000 per authority by forming the partnership and working together.

Members asked the Portfolio Holder about and commented on:

- Local Development Framework
- Rochester coach park
- The progress of the Star Hill to Sun Pier Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme
- The list of companies renting space at the Innovation Centre
- Development sites, in particular Rochester Riverside and the “Big Blue (old Colonial Insurance building, Chatham)
- Specific thanks from the Committee to the Tourism Manager and Visitor Information Centre Manager.

**Decision:**

The committee thanked Councillor Chitty for attending the meeting and the information and answers she had provided and requested that the list of companies renting space at the Innovation Centre is circulated to the committee.

**792 Local Transport Plan - results from the public consultation and framework for funding priorities**

**Discussion:**

The Principal Transport Planner introduced the report and advised Members of the completed public consultation carried out on the provisional Local Transport Plan (LTP) Transport Strategy. He explained that the draft plan built on the responses received and suggested a framework to develop the priorities of the first LTP3 Implementation Plan 2011 - 2015.

The report gave details of the consultation process and listed the number of organisations and places in which consultation had taken place. The committee was asked to consider the comments received as part of the consultation, the eleven schemes (shown in appendix 3 of the report, page 31 of the agenda), which were the recommended areas where spending should take place next year, and make recommendations to Cabinet.

Members commented that the report did not give details of what would not be achieved due to the reduction of 58% in funding and were advised that the LTP gave an overview of what the council would like to achieve and the Implementation Plan would set out what could be achieved within the available funding. When requested, officers advised that the Implementation Plan was not available until the overarching strategy had been agreed at Council on 3 March 2011.

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**Decision:**

The Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the comments received as part of the consultation for the draft 15 year LTP3 Transport Strategy and the framework on which the first LTP3 Implementation Plan is based and recommended it to Cabinet.

**793 Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and Flood Risk Regulations 2009**

**Discussion:**

The Head of Capital Projects, Road Safety and Networks gave a comprehensive overview of the mandatory work required by the Environment Agency by 22 June 2011 and the future work to be accomplished over the following 12–18 months to comply with the duties imposed on the council by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and Flood Risk Regulations 2009.

The committee was advised that the aim of the regulations was to reduce the likelihood and consequence of flooding by establishing a common framework for the understanding and managing of flood risk.

Members were informed that officers were working together with other authorities across the south east of England to achieve a consistent approach to the design and development of the council's policy, so that there would be consistency for residents and businesses across the region. Officers would also submit a further, detailed report during June/July 2011 for the committee's consideration.

The committee asked officers to be especially careful when producing and publishing maps of potential flood risk areas, as once they were published they could be used by insurance companies when determining their risks and premiums.

Members also asked about the possibility of Medway being exempt from having to undertake the work, as the primary risk of significant flooding arose only from tidal flooding and not from rainfall or river floods. Officers advised that until guidance had been published which defined the meaning of "significant" they were unable to answer this point.

**Decision:**

The committee:

- (a) noted the contents of the report;
- (b) recommended that Council adds responsibility for the review and scrutiny of flood and coastal erosion risk management functions under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 to this committee's remit;

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(c) noted that a future report would be submitted for consideration in June or July 2011.

**794 Work Programme**

**Discussion:**

The Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinator introduced the report highlighting the additional items to be added to the work programme, as set out in paragraph 3.4 of the report.

The committee was also advised that the annual refresh of the Community Safety Partnership Plan which was due to be reported in March 2011 would not be completed in time for that meeting, so would be considered at a later date. The committee discussed the timing of the next meeting with consideration to election purdah coming into force on 25 March 2011.

**Decision:**

The committee agreed to:

- (a) move the meeting scheduled for 31 March to 17 March 2011;
- (b) note the inclusion of a six month update report in June 2011 on the progress made from recommendations of the PACT review;
- (c) note that in July/August 2011 an update report of the Winter Service Policy and Winter Service Plan, following the Task Group report in November 2010, would be submitted for consideration.

**Chairman**

**Date:**

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