

AGENDA

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Wednesday, 18 March 2015

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT

Membership:

Councillors Monique Bonney, Andy Booth (Vice-Chairman), Lloyd Bowen (Chairman), Derek Conway, John Coulter, Peter Marchington, Gareth Randall and Ben Stokes.

Quorum = 3

	Pages
1. Apologies for Absence and Confirmation of Substitutes	
2. Minutes	
To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 January 2015 (Minute Nos. 429 - 434) as a correct record.	
3. Declarations of Interest	
Councillors should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves or their spouse, civil partner or person with whom they are living with as a spouse or civil partner. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.	
The Chairman will ask Members if they have any interests to declare in respect of items on this agenda, under the following headings:	
(a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) under the Localism Act 2011. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DPI, the Member must leave the meeting and not take part in the discussion or vote. This applies even if there is provision for public speaking.	
(b) Disclosable Non Pecuniary (DNPI) under the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council in May 2012. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DNPI interest, the Member may stay, speak and vote on the matter.	
Advice to Members: If any Councillor has any doubt about the existence or nature of any DPI or DNPI which he/she may have in any item on this agenda, he/she should seek advice from the Director of Corporate Services as Monitoring Officer, the Head of Legal or from other Solicitors in Legal Services as early as possible, and in advance of the Meeting.	

Part One - Substantive Item

4. Corporate Equalities Strategy 1 - 12

The Committee is asked to consider the issues raised in the report for the development of the Council's new Corporate Equalities Strategy. The Cabinet Member for Performance has been invited to assist with the review.

Part Two - Business Item

5. Review of the Committee's first year 13 - 22

To review the Committee's first year (report attached).

Issued on Monday, 9 March 2015

The reports included in this agenda can be made available in **alternative formats**. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, **please contact DEMOCRATIC SERVICES on 01795 417330**. To find out more about this Committee please visit www.swale.gov.uk

Director of Corporate Services Swale Borough Council,
Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT

Policy Development and Review Committee		Agenda Item: 4
Meeting Date	18 March 2015	
Report Title	Corporate Equalities Strategy	
Cabinet Member	Cllr Ted Wilcox, Cabinet Member for Performance	
SMT Lead	Chief Executive	
Head of Service	David Clifford	
Lead Officer	Bob Pullen	
Key Decision	No	
Classification	Open	
Forward Plan		
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To consider the report; 2. To make any recommendations on how the Council's new Corporate Equalities Scheme should be developed. 	

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council published a Corporate Equality Scheme (CES) in 2011. The scheme fulfilled our duty under the Equality Act 2010 and described how we aimed to fulfil our moral, social and legal obligations to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.
- 1.2 The existing scheme is due to be replaced this year, and the purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an opportunity to influence how the new scheme is developed.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council published its current CES in 2011. This was a year ahead of the deadline set by the Equality Act 2010 and the current Scheme runs from 2011-2015.
- 2.2 The Equality Act 2010 sets out a series of specific duties designed to help public sector bodies meet the general duty. Further details of these requirements are provided in Appendix I.

- 2.3 One of these requirements is to publish specified items of information to demonstrate its compliance with the general duty across its functions, information on the effect that its policies and practices have had on people who share protected characteristics, and information to demonstrate the extent to which it furthered the aims of the general duty for its employees and for others with an interest in the way it performs its functions.
- 2.4 SBC has chosen to fulfil this function by publishing a CES, and is proposing to publish a new version, to replace the existing one, covering the period 2015-18.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an opportunity to influence how the new CES is developed.
- 3.2 The key characteristics for Swale in regard to equality and diversity are listed in Appendix II. The data for these characteristics are drawn principally from the results of the 2011 Census. Where possible, the data for Swale is compared with that for all twelve Kent districts (ie. excluding Medway), the South East, and nationally.
- 3.3 The current CES lists three priorities which are in turn underpinned by a series of 'areas for improvement'. The three priorities are to:
- build equality in how we commission, procure and deliver services;
 - promote equality as a local employer; and
 - improve local engagement.
- 3.4 The 'areas for improvement' were also listed in the CES, but the detail for how they were to be tackled was contained in a separate Action Plan which was not published. Many of the 'areas of improvement' relate to corporate or internal processes (workforce diversity, equal pay gap, workforce training etc).
- 3.5 The new CES the Council will be publishing later this year provides the opportunity to consider whether we take a similar approach, or whether the data provided at Appendix II, or other developments within the Borough, warrant a different approach.
- 3.6 The following questions are therefore designed to enable the Committee to explore what approach the Council might take:
- the data provided at Appendix II is presented at a summary level. Is it too detailed to include in the CES? Should more detailed data be provided in the draft CES? What would be gained by doing so?
 - should the CES contain new priorities? Should the focus be on Swale, its residents and its communities, rather than 'corporate SBC'?

- what should the focus be on? Community cohesion? Actions directed at groups with particular characteristics?

3.7 An indicative timeline for developing and publishing the CES is at Appendix III. It would be helpful to receive the Committee's views on this too.

4 Alternative Options

4.1 To not develop and publish a new Corporate Equalities Strategy, although this would result in the Council being in breach of the Equality Act 2010.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 The Cabinet Member for Performance has seen this report in draft, as have the Chief Executive and Policy and Performance Manager.

5.2 It is proposed to discuss the development of the new scheme with interested organisations, and a draft scheme will be issued for formal consultation later this year.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	<p>The scheme underpins all three of the Corporate Plan priority themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A Borough to be proud of; ▪ A Community to be proud of; and ▪ A Council to be proud of. <p>In addition, the scheme directly supports some of our key outcomes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ communities across Swale in which people work together to solve the issues that confront their local areas; and ▪ a low-crime Borough in which a 'zero tolerance' approach is taken to antisocial behaviour and no-one has to live in fear of crime, domestic abuse or intimidation.
Financial, Resource and Property	None identified at this stage.
Legal and Statutory	The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on local authorities to publish an Equality Scheme.
Crime and Disorder	A range of initiatives are run by the Community Safety Partnership that tackle inequality and hate crime. In particular, community cohesion work with emerging communities in the Sheerness area

	to promote fair access to services. The Prevent agenda is also in place to identify those at risk of radicalisation and the programme ensures that it is not unfairly targeting individuals based on their beliefs but on targeted risk.
Sustainability	None identified at this stage.
Health and Wellbeing	The new Corporate Equalities Strategy will support and underpin the Council's role in working in partnership to reduce health inequality and influence the improvement of and access to health and mental health services in the Borough.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	All of the implications regarding equality and diversity will be addressed either in the new Corporate Equalities Scheme itself or in the main body of covering reports. The scheme will be accompanied by a Community Impact Assessment.

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Equality Act 2010 provisions
- Appendix II: Swale – Equality and diversity key characteristics
- Appendix III: Timetable for publishing a new Corporate Equalities Strategy

8 Background Papers

Swale Borough Council Corporate Equality Scheme 2011-13:
<http://www.swale.gov.uk/equalities-scheme/>

Equality Act 2010 provisions

The general duty is set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010:
<https://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance>

In summary, those subject to the Act (which includes local authorities and also applies to other organisations, private bodies or voluntary organisations who are carrying out public functions on behalf of a public authority) must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- advance opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

These three bullet points are often referred to as the aims of the general equality duty.

The duty covers eight protected characteristics – age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. These are also known as the protected groups. The duty also covers marriage and civil partnership but not for all aspects of the duty.

The specific duties require a public authority to publish specific items of information:

- a) Publish information – publish sufficient information to demonstrate its compliance with the general equality duty across its functions. Initially, this had to be achieved by 31 July 2011, and at least annually after that from the first date of publication. This includes information on the effect that its policies and practices have had on people who share protected characteristics, to demonstrate the extent to which it furthered the aims of the general duty for its employees and for others with an interest in the way it performs its functions.
- b) Public authorities (with more than 150 employees) also have to publish the following information:
 - evidence of analysis that they have undertaken to establish whether their policies or practices have (or would) further the aims of the general equality duty;
 - details of the information that they considered in carrying out this analysis;
 - details of engagement that they undertook with people who they considered to have an interest in furthering the aims of the general duty; and

- prepare and publish equality objectives. Initially, public authorities had, by 6 April 2012, to prepare and publish (i) objectives that it thinks it should achieve to meet one or more of the aims of the general duty and (ii) details of the engagement that it undertook in developing its objectives with people whom it considers to have an interest in furthering the aims of the general equality duty.

Swale – Equality and diversity key characteristics

AGE AND GENDER¹

Total population

	Swale		Kent districts	
Population	139,200		1,493,500	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
No.	68,800	70,300	731,400	762,100
%	49.5%	50.5%	49.0%	51.0%

Swale is the third most populous district in Kent. There are more females to males in Kent and this pattern is seen in all of Kent's districts. Swale has the least percentage difference between females and males in Kent.

Mean age

	Swale			Kent districts		
	Total persons	Males	Females	Total persons	Males	Females
Mean age	39.9	39.0	40.8	40.6	39.5	41.6

2013 Mid-year Population Estimates by 5-year Group and Gender

Swale

	Total persons		Males		Females	
	No.	% of total population	No.	%	No.	%
All ages	139,200	-	68,800	49.5%	70,300	50.5%
0-4	9,000	6.5%	4,600	51.3%	4,400	48.7%
5-9	8,600	6.2%	4,500	52.1%	4,100	47.9%
10-14	8,300	6.0%	4,200	50.8%	4,100	49.2%
15-19	8,900	6.4%	4,600	51.8%	4,300	48.2%
20-24	7,900	5.7%	4,200	52.4%	3,800	47.6%
25-29	8,100	5.8%	4,000	49.3%	4,100	50.7%
30-34	8,400	6.1%	4,100	48.0%	4,400	52.0%
35-39	7,800	5.6%	3,800	48.9%	4,000	51.1%
40-44	9,600	6.9%	4,700	48.8%	4,900	51.2%

¹2013 mid-year population estimates – ONS, 26/06/14

	Total persons		Males		Females	
	No.	% of total population	No.	%	No.	%
45-49	10,700	7.7%	5,300	49.8%	5,400	50.2%
50-54	9,700	6.9%	4,900	50.2%	4,800	49.8%
55-59	8,500	6.1%	4,400	51.3%	4,100	48.7%
60-64	8,200	5.9%	4,000	49.2%	4,200	50.8%
65-69	8,700	6.3%	4,300	48.9%	4,500	51.1%
70-74	5,900	4.2%	2,900	48.8%	3,000	51.2%
75-79	4,500	3.2%	2,100	47.0%	2,400	53.0%
80-84	3,200	2.3%	1,300	41.4%	1,900	58.6%
85-89	1,900	1.3%	700	36.9%	1,200	63.1%
90+	1,000	0.7%	300	25.5%	700	74.5%

Kent districts

	Total persons		Males		Females	
	No.	% of total population	No.	%	No.	%
All ages	1,493,500	-	731,400	49.0%	762,100	51.0%
0-4	91,300	6.1%	47,000	51.5%	44,300	48.5%
5-9	89,500	6.0%	46,000	51.5%	43,400	48.5%
10-14	87,600	5.9%	44,800	51.1%	42,800	48.9%
15-19	95,700	6.4%	48,800	51.0%	46,900	49.0%
20-24	90,700	6.1%	45,800	50.5%	44,900	49.5%
25-29	85,500	5.7%	42,700	49.9%	42,900	50.1%
30-34	86,600	5.8%	41,900	48.4%	44,600	51.6%
35-39	85,400	5.7%	41,600	48.7%	43,800	51.3%
40-44	104,500	7.0%	51,000	48.8%	53,500	51.2%
45-49	112,400	7.5%	55,700	49.6%	56,700	50.4%
50-54	102,300	6.9%	50,900	49.8%	51,400	50.2%
55-59	89,000	6.0%	43,900	49.4%	45,000	50.6%
60-64	86,700	5.8%	42,200	48.6%	44,500	51.4%
65-69	91,800	6.1%	44,600	48.6%	47,200	51.4%
70-74	64,100	4.3%	30,500	47.6%	33,600	52.4%
75-79	52,000	3.5%	23,900	46.0%	28,100	54.0%
80-84	39,700	2.7%	16,800	42.4%	22,900	57.6%
85-89	24,200	1.6%	9,000	37.0%	15,300	63.0%
90+	14,500	1.0%	4,100	28.3%	10,400	71.7%

Ethnicity

Percentage of population by detailed ethnic category in Kent districts, the South East and England – Census 2011

	Swale	Kent districts	South East	England
White				
English/Welsh/Scottish/ Northern Irish/British	92.9%	89.1%	85.2%	79.8%
Irish	0.6%	0.7%	0.9%	1.0%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.5%	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%
Other white	2.6%	3.6%	4.4%	4.6%
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups				
White and black Caribbean	0.4%	0.4%	0.5%	0.8%
White and black African	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%
White and Asian	0.3%	0.5%	0.7%	0.6%
Other mixed	0.3%	0.4%	0.5%	0.5%
Asian/Asian British				
Indian	0.4%	1.2%	1.8%	2.6%
Pakistani	0.1%	0.2%	1.1%	2.1%
Bangladeshi	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.8%
Chinese	0.2%	0.4%	0.6%	0.7%
Other Asian	0.3%	1.2%	1.4%	1.5%
Black/African/Caribbean/ Black British				
African	0.7%	0.8%	1.0%	1.8%
Caribbean	0.2%	0.2%	0.4%	1.1%
Other black	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.5%
Other ethnic group				
Arab	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.4%
Any other ethnic group	0.1%	0.4%	0.4%	0.6%

The White ethnic group is the largest group within Swale. The proportion of this group in Swale is higher than in Kent, the South East and nationally.

DISABILITY²

There is no single measure of the number of people with a disability. The definitions of disability vary and often rely on an individual's perception of their own health. The data provided here relates to the number of people with a disability or a disabling condition.

People with a long term health problem or disability – Census 2011

	Swale	Kent districts	South East	England and Wales
Total	135,835	1,463,730	8,634,750	56,075,912
% of all people with long-term health problem or disability	18.6%	17.6%	15.7%	17.9%
% of all people without long-term health problem or disability	81.4%	82.4%	84.3%	82.1%

At the time of the 2011 Census, Swale was the fourth district in Kent with the most people with a long term health problem or disability. Swale is a percentage point above the average for all Kent districts in this respect and higher than the average for the South East and England and Wales.

Total disability claimants, May 2014

	Swale	Kent districts	South East	England and Wales
% of total population	8.6%	7.4%	6.2%	7.7%

The percentage of people in Swale claiming a disability benefit as at May 2014 equates to 11,930 claimants. The percentage is above the Kent, South East and England and Wales averages.

²2011 Census, Office for National Statistics

Religion or belief

Religion in Swale, Kent districts, South East and England – Census 2011

	Swale	Kent districts	South East	England and Wales
Christian	63.0%	62.5%	59.8%	59.4%
Buddhist	0.2%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
Hindu	0.3%	0.7%	1.1%	1.5%
Jewish	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.5%
Muslim	0.6%	1.0%	2.3%	5.0%
Sikh	0.1%	0.7%	0.6%	0.8%
Other religion	0.4%	0.4%	0.5%	0.4%
No religion	28.8%	26.8%	27.2%	24.7%
Religion not stated	6.6%	7.3%	7.4%	7.2%

In 2011, Christianity remains the largest religion in Swale, Kent, the South East and England and Wales.

Marriage and civil partnerships

Marital and civil partnership status – Census 2011

	Swale	Kent districts	South East	England
Single	31.1%	31.3%	31.9%	34.6%
Married	48.3%	48.8%	49.3%	46.6%
In a registered same sex partnership	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
Separated	3.2%	2.8%	2.5%	2.5%
Divorced	10.0%	9.6%	9.1%	9.0%
Widowed	7.0%	7.3%	6.9%	6.9%

Swale has a similar profile to Kent, the South East and nationally in terms of marital and civil partnership status.

Timetable for publishing a new Corporate Equalities Strategy

Date	Activity
18 March	Policy Development and Review Committee – initial discussion
April-May	Informal discussions with interested groups and development of draft Corporate Equalities Strategy
Late May/early June	Cabinet Member/SMT Lead Officer sign-off of consultation draft
8 June - 31 July	Formal consultation period
w/b 3 August	Analyse responses and finalise new Corporate Equalities Strategy
11 August	SMT Business meeting consideration
16 September	Policy Development and Review Committee consideration post-consultation
7 October	Cabinet consideration
21 October	Council consideration
End October	Publish new Corporate Equalities Strategy

Policy Development and Review Committee		Agenda Item: 5
Meeting Date	18 March 2015	
Report Title	Review of the Policy Development and Review Committee's First Year	
SMT Lead	Chief Executive	
Head of Service	David Clifford, Policy and Performance Manager	
Lead Officer	Bob Pullen, Policy and Performance Officer	
Key Decision	No	
Classification	Open	
Forward Plan		
Recommendations	1. To consider the report and make any recommendations.	

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report takes stock of the first year of the Policy Development and Review Committee since it was established at the start of the 2014/15 Municipal Year.
- 1.2 Part of the Committee's Terms of Reference (Appendix I) are to report annually to Council on its work, and to make any recommendations for amended working methods if appropriate. This report is not an annual report, but it should serve as an opportunity for the Committee to consider what it would like to see included in the annual report.

2 Background

- 2.1 Up until 2014/15, the Council had two overview and scrutiny committees - a Scrutiny Committee and a Policy Overview Committee - which were established in 2009. Whilst the arrangements worked well, there had been some confusion regarding the role of each committee, and at times a lack of clarity as to which committee an item should be considered by. There was also a need to review the 'call in' procedure to make this easier to understand and to bring it in line with best practice.
- 2.2 It was therefore decided that the General Purposes Committee would review the Council's overview and scrutiny arrangements to define more clearly the roles of each committee and update the call in procedure.
- 2.3 The General Purposes Committee considered that 'pre-scrutiny' and involvement of scrutiny in matters that the Cabinet intends to consider was a very useful tool, and so it proposed that a new committee be established which focussed on this

area, in particular the development of policy. This new committee would not be designated as an overview and scrutiny committee under the Local Government Act 2000, and therefore will not consider 'call in' items. Its Terms of Reference are at Appendix I.

- 2.4 The General Purposes Committee recommended to Council that these changes be made, and Council approved them at their meeting on 19 February 2014. Reports and minutes of the relevant meetings can be accessed from the links provided under 'Background papers' at Section 8 of this report.

3 Consideration

- 3.1 The inaugural meeting of the Policy Development and Review Committee was held on 28 May 2014. The Committee:

- elected the Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the year; and
- considered a schedule of policies, strategies and plans which were due to be reviewed over the course of the year.

- 3.2 The report covering the Committee's programme of work for the year sought to summarise its purpose as follows: "To assist the Cabinet in developing or reviewing either new or existing policies, strategies or plans. Its workload is expected to be driven by the natural cycle of considering existing policies, strategies or plans of the council as they come up for review or providing advice to Cabinet on proposals for new council policy referred by Cabinet, Council or the Scrutiny Committee".

- 3.3 Immediately following the inaugural meeting, the Chief Executive received an e-mail from the Leader of the Labour Group to say that he was withdrawing the Labour Group from the Committee. The reasons given were that he: "did not believe that a genuine review of council policies will be served by it". This has resulted in three vacancies on the Committee which have existed since the inaugural meeting on 28 May 2014. The composition of the Committee for 2014/15 has therefore been seven Conservative members (including the Chairman and Vice-Chairman), one Independent member, and three vacancies.

- 3.4 A schedule of meetings and the policies, plans and strategies considered by the Committee is at Appendix II. This also provides a summary of what the Committee considered.

- 3.5 From the outset, as agendas were compiled, and policies, plans and strategies were identified for the Committee's consideration, the relevant Cabinet Member and Lead Officer(s) were invited to attend the meetings. This worked well and the minutes show that, except for one or two occasions when they were unavailable, Cabinet Members attended all meetings to which they had been invited.

3.6 One aspect that did come to light during the year was that while the relevant Heads of Service were attending the meetings, they were being accompanied by relatively junior members of staff and that these staff were being given the opportunity to present reports. This has several benefits:

- it enables staff who can often bring a local rather than a corporate view of how a policy might work in practice to meet and discuss emerging policy with members other than the Cabinet;
- it provides staff with an opportunity to develop their presentation skills;
- non-executive members actually get to hear from officers who have led on the development of policies; and
- this can all take place in a forum which is less adversarial than overview and scrutiny can sometimes be.

3.7 A trawl of the Cabinet and Council agendas for the year shows that all major policies, plans, and strategies had been considered by the Committee prior to their approval. The exceptions were the Local Plan and Licensing Policy, which are in any case the preserve of the Local Development Framework Panel and General Licensing Committee respectively. This reinforces the need to maintain a robust register of policies and to liaise with Heads of Services regularly to ensure that the information held on the Policy Register is up to date.

4 Proposals

4.1 The Committee is invited to consider this report and make any recommendations.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 The Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman were consulted on this report in draft, as were the SMT Lead and Head of Service.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	<p>The Committee considered policies and strategies which encompassed all of the 2011-15 Corporate Plan priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ embracing localism; ▪ open for business; and ▪ healthy environment.
Financial, Resource and Property	None identified at this stage.
Legal and	The establishment of the Policy Development and Review

Statutory	Committee required a change to the Council's Constitution. Any change to the Committee's Terms of Reference would require further change to the Council's Constitution, and the appropriate Committee to consider any such change would be the General Purposes Committee in the first instance.
Crime and Disorder	The Committee considered the Community Safety Strategy and would be expected to consider this periodically as the Strategy is updated annually.
Sustainability	None identified at this stage.
Health and Wellbeing	None identified at this stage, although the Committee did consider the Sport and Physical Activity Framework which has strong links to the health and wellbeing agenda.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	The Committee will have initial consideration of how the existing Corporate Equalities Strategy will be revised/replaced at the meeting on 18 March, with further involvement in the new Municipal Year.

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Terms of Reference of the Policy Development and Review Committee
- Appendix II: Policies considered by the Policy Development and Review Committee during 2014/15

8 Background Papers

8.1 The following documents are published with this report and form part of the report:

- General Purposes Committee meeting 3 February 2014 – Reports on Constitution Review:
- Covering Report:
<http://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/Data/General%20Purposes%20Committee/20140203/Agenda/Report%20for%20Item%204%20-%203C8412AC68CC4E40B235B05D854DA918.pdf>
- Appendices:
<http://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/Data/General%20Purposes%20Com>

mittee/20140203/Agenda/Annex%201%20for%20Item%204%20-%203CFD81F149D242DF8C3867DFC91B453D.pdf

- Minutes of General Purposes Committee meeting on 3 February 2014:
[http://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/ceListdocuments.aspx?MID=554&DF=03%2f02%2f2014&A=1&R=0&F=embed\\$Minutes\\$.htm](http://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/ceListdocuments.aspx?MID=554&DF=03%2f02%2f2014&A=1&R=0&F=embed$Minutes$.htm)
- Constitution Review – Report to Council on 19 February 2014:
<http://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/Data/Council/20140219/Agenda/Report%20for%20Item%2012%20-%2041CDC52F390E4C6BBCB2BDA96FFCFA97.pdf>
- Minutes of Council meeting held on 19 February 2014:
<http://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/CeListDocuments.aspx?MID=473&RD=Minutes&DF=19%2f02%2f2014&A=1&R=0>

Terms of reference for the Policy Development and Review Committee

Within its terms of reference, the Committee will:

- (i) consider any built-in review of any existing policies, strategies or plans of the Council;
- (ii) consider existing policies in the light of changes to legislation or national guidance;
- (iii) consider other reviews of existing council policy referred by a Cabinet Member or by resolution of Cabinet, Scrutiny Committee or Full Council;
- (iv) consider proposals for new council policy referred by a Cabinet Member, Cabinet or Full Council;
- (v) provide pre-decision comment on policy decisions.

A policy shall not be re-considered by the committee within two years or before its built in review period, unless by resolution of the full Council or Cabinet, or as required by a change in legislation or national guidance.

The chairman may invite Cabinet Members and officers of the council or other persons to attend committee meetings to answer questions pertinent to the business of the committee.

Having considered an item, the committee may make recommendations to the person or body that referred the item to it; Cabinet, Cabinet Member, Officer of the Council or the Full Council.

The Policy Development and Review Committee shall exercise overall responsibility for any finances made available to it.

Annual Report – the Policy Development and Review Committee must report annually to the Full Council on their work and make recommendations for amended working methods if appropriate.

Policies considered by the Policy Development and Review Committee during 2014/15

Date considered	Policy title	Summary of Committee considerations
8 July 2014	Communications Strategy	<p>The draft Communications Strategy for 2014/15 sets out the Council's approach and priorities for effective communication. The Council was aiming for a clear and consistent voice and identity so that residents were more informed about and satisfied with its services.</p> <p>The Committee considered that the communications priorities were the right ones for Swale, and that there were no unintended negative consequences of focusing on those priorities.</p>
“	Corporate Plan for 2015-18	<p>The Committee considered the work needed to develop a new Corporate Plan for the Council covering the period 2015-18. The Corporate Plan is the overarching statement of SBC's medium-term strategic objectives.</p> <p>The Committee made a number of detailed comments and suggested changes on the draft plan which would be fed into the version that was due to be consulted on in the Autumn.</p>
3 September 2014	Community Asset Transfer Policy	<p>The first version of the Community Asset Transfer Policy was approved by Cabinet in August 2009. It was developed out of a need for a clear framework within which to structure the transfer of community assets, the principle of which was beginning to emerge as a corporate priority for the Council.</p> <p>The Policy was revised and updated in April 2013 in response to comments made by the Council's external auditor. Since this last update, a number of asset transfers have taken place that highlighted the need for some further amendments and clarifications.</p> <p>The Committee raised a number of detailed points including: leasehold and freehold considerations; promotion of opportunities for community groups; advice and guidance on the process; and rental options.</p>

Date considered	Policy title	Summary of Committee considerations
“	Volunteering Strategy	<p>The Strategy sets out a strategic approach for the Council, working in partnership with other agencies, to increase volunteering within Swale, including a series of priorities and actions for the next three years.</p> <p>The Committee made a number of comments on the document and recommended to Cabinet that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>the figures in the report be updated and there be more publicity, to include who to contact for further information, and Swale Councillor and officer volunteer numbers.</i>
15 October 2014	Planning Enforcement Strategy and Charter	<p>The Planning Enforcement Strategy and Charter was due to be reviewed, and the Committee were invited to have an input to this process.</p> <p>Planning Enforcement relates to anything that requires planning permission but does not have it, or failing to comply with a planning condition. Additionally, the Planning Enforcement Service also issues Section 215 Notices requiring land to be cleaned up when its condition adversely affects the amenity of the area.</p> <p>The Committee considered the issues raised by the Strategy and Charter including: liaison between the Planning Enforcement and Legal Services Teams; resources; communications on enforcement notices served; and Members' reporting planning breaches. The Committee will revisit the Strategy and Charter in the next Municipal Year.</p>
19 November 2014	Local First Policy	<p>The Local First policy aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ maximise the proportion of our spend that is retained locally; ▪ deliver social value in the Swale BC area; and ▪ support and enable local businesses, town and parish councils and the voluntary and community sector to bid for contracts and services. <p>The Committee explored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ how the policy worked in practice; ▪ how it was promoted;

Date considered	Policy title	Summary of Committee considerations
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ criteria for evaluating tenders; ▪ the database of local businesses; ▪ the new “Swale Means Business” website; ▪ training and development; and ▪ apprenticeships.
“	Sport and Physical Activity Framework	<p>The Sport and Physical Activity Framework was developed following a review in 2011 and public consultation in February 2012 with both the Sport and Physical Activity (SPA) Network and the residents of the Borough to review and develop the role the Council should be undertaking in relation to SPA, and to provide partners in Swale with a Framework from which they can develop their own strategies for action. The Committee considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ how funds secured from Sport England were being deployed to encourage greater take-up of SPA in Swale, including partnership arrangements with Health Trainers and Job Centre Plus; ▪ communication with councillors about Health Trainer programmes; and ▪ officer support for the Swale Community Leisure Trust.
14 January 2015	Community Safety Strategy	<p>The Swale Community Safety Partnership annually refreshes its Partnership Plan following a Strategic Assessment process and agreement of priorities by Partners. The process has begun to refresh the plan for 2015/16, and the purpose of this session was to afford the Committee with the opportunity to influence the refresh process. The Committee considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the key activities delivered by the Community Safety Partnership; ▪ the Community Payback Scheme; ▪ community cohesion; ▪ Swale Action To End Domestic Abuse (SATEDA) Freedom Programme;

Date considered	Policy title	Summary of Committee considerations
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ child sexual exploitation; ▪ joint working with the Clinical Commissioning Groups; ▪ crime figures; and ▪ priorities for 2015/16.
“	Social Media Policy	<p>The Committee considered drafts of both the Social Media Policy and Guidelines and the Customer Use Policy. The policies were being introduced in response to the increasing use the Council was making of key social media tools to raise awareness of our services and shape policy development through communicating updates, photos, videos, latest news, events, supported campaigns, and information about our Council services and those available from other local authorities and partners.</p> <p>The Social Media Policy and Guidelines was designed to guide Council Departments on when and how to use social media. The Customer Use Policy is designed to guide officers responsible for managing the Council’s social media accounts, eg on appropriate service standards etc.</p> <p>The Committee explored issues around the display of images on SBC’s website and social media accounts of vulnerable adults and children; access to council services for residents who were not online; and training for members on social media.</p>
“	Tree Policy	<p>The draft policy set out SBC’s responsibility for trees on its land. SBC had a role in managing, maintaining and enhancing the environment and aims to sustain a balanced and healthy tree population, while recognising the constraints of budget and prioritising safety first. The Committee considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ who residents should contact if they had concerns about trees on Council-owned land; ▪ trees in relation to planning applications; and ▪ whether the Council should have a policy to promote the planting of trees more generally in Swale.