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## POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE

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**MINUTES** of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 3HT on Tuesday, 6 November 2018 from 7.00pm - 8.27 pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Cameron Beart, Andy Booth (Chairman), Lloyd Bowen, Nicholas Hampshire, James Hall (substitute for Councillor Mike Baldock), James Hunt (Vice-Chairman), Nigel Kay, Peter Marchington (substitute for Councillor Tina Booth), Roger Truelove and Ted Wilcox.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Martyn Cassell, Steph Curtis, Charlotte Hudson, Mike Marsh, Jo Millard and Bob Pullen.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillors Roger Clark, Mike Cosgrove (Cabinet Member for Regeneration), Alan Horton (Cabinet Member for Housing and Safer Communities) and Tony Winckless.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Mike Baldock and Tina Booth.

### 305 FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chairman drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

### 306 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2018 (Minute Nos. 202 – 206) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### 307 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor James Hunt declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 5 – Beach huts provision, as he owned a Beach Hut in the Borough.

### 308 CHANGE TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chairman advised of a change to the running order of the meeting, to bring forward the item on Public Space CCTV Strategy for Swale.

### 309 PUBLIC SPACE CCTV STRATEGY FOR SWALE

The Chairman welcomed the Cabinet Member for Housing and Safer Communities, the Head of Housing, Economy and Community Services and the Interim Economy and Community Services Manager to the meeting.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Safer Communities gave a presentation on Public Space Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) in Swale. He gave a history of the use of CCTV in Swale and advised that a draft strategy would be considered at the Policy Development and Review Committee (PDRC) meeting in January 2019 and be considered again at a future PDRC meeting, after the strategy consultation. The

Cabinet Member for Housing and Safer Communities advised that the final Public Space CCTV Strategy for Swale should be published in Spring 2019.

In the presentation, the Cabinet Member for Housing and Safer Communities outlined issues around the CCTV service which included:

- Swale Borough Council's partnership with Medway Council;
- compliance with relevant regulations;
- quality of footage and effectiveness of system;
- costs of operating and maintaining;
- private property and business premises monitoring;
- use of smart phones for recording footage;
- lack of funding from the Police;
- the effect of recently de-commissioned cameras;
- options of how monitoring could be carried out in future; and
- technological advancement and the use of Town Centre WiFi.

In delivering the presentation, the Cabinet Member for Housing and Safer Communities referred to public interest in the CCTV system and advised that Windmill Road and Howard Avenue Neighbourhood Watch Residents' Association were currently collecting signatures to petition for the recommissioning of cameras in that area.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Safer Communities asked Members to consider what should be included in the strategy.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member for Housing and Safer Communities, the Head of Housing, Economy and Community Services and the Interim Economy and Community Services Manager for their attendance and asked Members of the Committee to direct any comments or questions on the draft strategy via Democratic Services by 21 November 2018.

### **310 BEACH HUTS PROVISION**

The Chairman welcomed the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, the Head of Commissioning, Environment and Leisure and the Leisure and Technical Services Manager to the meeting.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration introduced the paper and sought Members' views on the provision of beach huts.

Members spoke positively about the development and expansion of beach huts in Swale. In the discussion that followed, the following points were made:

- beach huts enhanced the seafront and encouraged visitors to the area;
- more beach huts should be built;
- ancillary services such as toilets were necessary if more beach huts were built;
- were administration costs and regulations deterring potential purchasers;
- other areas, such as Sheerness, should be considered;

- the use of a few commercial huts for facilities such as shops or watersports should be considered;
- suggestion of including a timescale when selling on beach huts to those on the beach hut waiting list;
- the licence ensured that high standards were maintained;
- increasing the number of beach huts would be profitable for the Council;
- suggested the £25 retention fee to stay on the beach hut waiting list should be refundable on the purchase of a beach hut;
- clarification sought on how the sub-letting of beach huts was monitored;
- suggested a Financial Appraisal of the beach huts to compare profit from rent and sale of beach huts;
- clarification on how many more huts were planned and where they were planned to be sited;
- the attraction of the beach huts was not just financial;
- there needed to be a balance to avoid over-intensification of beach huts;
- could beach hut tenants buy a beach hut at the end of their term?;
- were there variations of lease times to suit;
- a standard licence for all would be more manageable;
- how was security of the beach huts managed?;
- Planning Regulations should be considered if more beach huts were sited; and
- non-beach site locations, such as woodlands, should be considered for the siting of huts.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration agreed to look at the rent-to-buy option.

The Leisure and Technical Services manager said that feedback from owners indicated that rules and regulations were welcome and said that beach hut associations were very proactive in encouraging self-help security for beach hut owners.

The Head of Commissioning, Environment and Leisure explained that the administration of the waiting list was time consuming and there was a risk of vacant huts and extra officer resource required if additional beach huts were rented rather than purchased. He advised that work had been carried out on plotting extra beach huts without flooding the market, and he explained the resale process of purchasing beach huts. He clarified the sub-letting clause in the licence.

The Head of Commissioning, Environment and Leisure agreed that toilet facilities would be vital if further beach huts were sited at Minster and he explained that of the £100k required to carry out this work, there was currently £30k in reserve. He added that drainage surveys had already been carried out near the Little Oyster car park.

A Member suggested siting beach huts between the Yacht Club and Cain's Casino, Sheerness and at the sandy beach at Shellness, on land already owned by SBC.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Leisure and Technical Services Manager explained that there had been some quality issues in beach huts installed

at Leysdown earlier in the year and a second wall had been installed to protect from water ingress. He advised that an improved specification would be used in future.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration thanked Members for their suggestions.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, the Head of Commissioning, Environment and Leisure and the Leisure and Technical Services Manager for their attendance.

### **311 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Policy and Performance Officer introduced the tabled work programme which included the items due to come before PDRC in the coming municipal year. He updated Members that the Swale Public Space CCTV Strategy item discussed earlier in the meeting would be considered again at the PDRC meeting on 16 January 2019.

In response to a question from a Member, the Policy and Performance Officer agreed to find out which consultants had been appointed for the Homelessness Strategy and circulate details to Members.

#### Chairman

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All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel