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## **EASTERN AREA COMMITTEE**

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**MINUTES** of the Virtual Meeting held via Skype on Thursday, 17 December 2020 from 7.00pm - 10.00pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Alastair Gould, Carole Jackson, Denise Knights (Chairman), Benjamin Martin, Ben J Martin, Hannah Perkin, Julian Saunders (Vice-Chairman), David Simmons, Eddie Thomas, Tim Valentine (Cabinet Member for Environment) and Mike Whiting.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Alister Andrews, Billy Attaway, Philippa Davies and Bob Pullen.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillors Cameron Beart, Monique Bonney, Roger Clark, Steve Davey, Mike Dendor, Tim Gibson, Angela Harrison, Ken Rowles and Tony Winckless.

Kent County Councillor Antony Hook.

Parish/Town Councillors Bex Ratchford (Clerk, Oare PC), Julian Speed (Lynsted with Kingsdown PC), Alan Stewart (Graveney with Goodnestone PC), Jeff Tutt (Dunkirk PC) and Chris Williams (Faversham TC).

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor Lloyd Bowen, KCC Councillor Andrew Bowles and Selling Parish Council.

### **359 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared.

### **360 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 September 2020 (Minute Nos. 132 – 139) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **361 MATTERS ARISING**

These were noted.

### **362 PUBLIC FORUM**

The Chair invited Rev. Dan Corcoran to speak on 'Joining up youth engagement'. Dan said he had moved to Faversham last September as a community priest to connect with community individuals, children, young people and families. His background was in education in inner city areas.

Despite the current pandemic, community outreach work was continuing and Dan operated a mobile youth centre to reach young people throughout the community. He had engaged young people with the support of local organisations and networks such as the Faversham County Lines hub and Faversham Town Council.

His experiences had mirrored those he had encountered in other areas of the country, i.e. activity being undertaken in silos, with very little joined up approaches. There was potential to link existing activity and effort on youth provision to make a bigger impact and to reach out and engage with more children and young people. The Children's Society Annual Report contained useful data at ward level and provided a valuable tool to align priorities. Dan said he was keen to explore a joined up approach to develop youth engagement in Faversham and the surrounding area.

Discussion ensued on the issues Dan had raised and members commented:

- Impressed with the mobile youth service which had visited various sites in the town centre and outlying villages;
- Decline in youth funding so important to 'join up' existing resources to make as big an impact as possible;
- Note this area is a KCC rather than Swale BC function;
- Who was responsible for monitoring effectiveness of existing contract?

The Chair thanked Dan for his presentation and outlined the funds the Committee had available for projects in the Eastern area.

### **363 WASTE COLLECTION AND STREET CLEANSING - FUTURE PROVISION**

Councillor Tim Valentine, Cabinet Member for Environment, introduced this item which sought to raise awareness that the current Mid Kent Waste contract was due to end in October 2023 and the work that has already started in preparation for the new contract, and to seek the views of the Committee. The current contractors also provided the street cleansing functions at Swale.

The current contract has a fully 'co-mingled' collection where all recycling is collected within a single wheeled bin. The disposal authority prefer the 'twin-stream' collection method, whereby paper and cardboard are collected separately to the other recycling, although this system would require an additional container for Swale residents.

Members welcomed collection of separated material at source as this would increase the value of recycled material. A parish council member suggested collection routes should be reconsidered as they experienced three separate collections down the same stretch of road.

Members discussed air quality and the potential to introduce cleaner and greener waste collection freighters as part of a new contract and welcomed that alternative fuel sources were going to be investigated.

Food waste recycling had always been a big challenge for Swale and by 2023, every household in England must be able to recycle food waste. The vast majority of houses in Swale already have this option and campaigns have been undertaken to reduce the amount of food waste created in the first place to increase the number of households in the Borough that separate food waste if created. Members drew attention to the high levels of composting that occurred in rural areas and suggested possible community composting schemes e.g. for allotments.

It was also suggested that garden and food waste could be co-mingled as it all went for composting at the moment in any case. However, it was possible that food waste might be sent for biodigestion which could lead to other revenue streams.

Contamination in wheelie bins affects recycling figures and costs much more to dispose of. Food waste, garden waste, textiles, black plastic bags and used nappies were all items that regularly get placed in the recycling incorrectly leading to collections being rejected by the disposal authority.

It was noted that there is a very good facility on Swale BC's website which clearly shows which item of waste should be put in which bin.

On street cleansing, it was not that those rural roads which suffered the most litter and detritus were those adjacent to main roads.

### **364 HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing spoke to this item and gave an overview of recent activity and plans for the future.

A new health and wellbeing action plan had been developed which had a vision where Swale residents:

- had enough to eat;
- have a decent home to live in;
- are helped to achieve healthy lifestyles;
- have a clean and safe environment in which to live and work;
- are helped to access employment;
- have a job with a living wage;
- have access to training and education.

While the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing will be overseeing the entire vision, many responsibilities will fall to other members of the Cabinet. A draft version of the plan was out for public consultation.

The plan was focussed on four workstreams:

- family health;
- healthy lifestyles;
- mental health/dementia; and
- wider determinants of health.

The plan also contained a range of case studies which sought to deliver the workstream themes.

Discussion ensued on:

- how Faversham and the surrounding area fitted with the various health authorities in Kent;
- the overwhelming need to promote good health and wellbeing in a non-NHS context.

**365 IMPROVING PARISH TO TOWN CONNECTIONS - NEXT STEPS**

The Vice-Chairman outlined progress made since the last meeting and some suggestions for taking this work forward. He would bring a proposal back to the next meeting.

**366 LOCAL ISSUES**

Town Councillor Williams spoke about an initiative launched by Faversham Town Council for a community lottery to support community projects and asked members to publicise it.

A member raised concerns about the 666 bus service to Ashford and suggested members join her in making representations to the MP about it.

A member said that a request had been made to Swale BC for a community governance review to look at parish boundaries given the level of new housing development taking place in the Eastern end of Swale.

**367 FUNDING AND WORK PLANNING**

The Vice-Chairman introduced a short report covering funding and work planning. He said it was important to get some processes in place in order to be able to allocate the funds the Committee had at the next meeting and to plan for the future. The Vice-Chairman proposed and Councillor Gould seconded that members agree to the approach proposed in the report.

Councillor David Simmons proposed and Councillor Mike Whiting seconded that a grant of £837 from the Committee's allocation should be made to the Doddington Allotment Association to fund the works detailed in the paper that the Committee had before them. On being put to the vote, the motion was carried.

Members discussed the other marker for a bid which had been put before the Committee in outline relating to a request by ward members for Teynham and Lynsted and East Downs for funding for lollipop crossing patrol people outside of village schools, Pelican crossings, 20 mph zones in Teynham, Lynsted and Oare, and rural buses. The Chair advised ward members to come back to the next meeting with detailed costings for consideration by the Committee.

Councillor Hannah Perkin proposed and Councillor Ben J Martin seconded that £10k of the Committee's allocation be ring-fenced for health and wellbeing projects. On being put to the vote, the motion was lost.

**Resolved:**

- (1) To agree the suggested process for allocating funding proposed for the 2020/21 and 2021/22 financial years;**
- (2) To develop a work plan for 2021/22;**
- (3) To agree the allocation of £837 to the Doddington Allotment Association.**

**368 MATTERS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE BY CABINET**

No issues were raised.

**369 MATTERS REFERRED TO CABINET BY THE COMMITTEE**

No issues were raised.

Chairman

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