
SHEPPEY AREA COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Virtual Meeting Via Skype on Tuesday, 15 June 2021 from 7.00 pm - 8.24 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Cameron Beart (Vice-Chairman), Richard Darby, Eakin, Simon Fowle, Angela Harrison, Ken Ingleton (Chairman), Peter Macdonald, Peter Marchington, Lee McCall and Pete Neal.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Martyn Cassell, Janet Dart and Jo Millard.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Steve Davey, Mike Dendor, Ken Rowles, Mike Whiting and Tony Winckless.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Elliott Jayes and Ken Pugh.

65.1 Election of Chairman

Members nominated Councillor Ken Ingleton to be elected as Chairman for the Municipal Year 2021/22, to be confirmed at the next Sheppey Area Committee in September 2021.

66.1 Election of Vice-Chairman

Members nominated Councillor Cameron Beart to be elected as Vice-Chairman for the Municipal year 2021/22, to be confirmed at the next Sheppey Area Committee in September 2021.

67.1 Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

68.1 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2021 (Minute no. 534-543) were taken as read, signed and approved subject to the following amendment to Minute No. 536:

“In response to a query from Parish Councillor Paul Day, representing Leysdown Parish Council, about funding for resurfacing local playgrounds, the Head of Commissioning, Environment and Leisure spoke about resurfacing work at Leysdown Coastal Park which would be completed once the weather conditions had improved, and he said it might be possible to factor in other sites.”

69.1 Matters arising from previous meetings

Members noted the progress on actions.

Chief Inspector (CI) Alan Rogers was in attendance and gave an update on Neighbourhood Policing in Sheppey. Sheerness has a regular reporting station where a proactive team were based. Clean ups of some streets had taken place.

Funding had been secured for officer overtime to deal with demands at Leysdown and Warden holiday parks over the summer. Operation Paris would take place again to meet summer demands this year. The Road Safety Team would be monitoring the Lower Road to tackle speeding and drink driving on key dates.

A question and answer session took place and the following issues were raised:

- The problems at Queenborough with trail and quad bikes being ridden dangerously were discussed;
- there was a need to tackle anti-social behaviour problems early on to stop them escalating;
- safety concerns about the barriers used for street closures were raised, they were padlocked so they could not be put in place when the High Street, Sheerness was supposed to be closed which caused confusion and potential danger. CI Rogers confirmed the Police were working with SBC to see what could be done to address this;
- electric scooters being ridden on roads without helmets - CI Rogers explained the difficulties with enforcement and said there was information on the Kent Police website about what could be done and a lot of education messages were put out on social media;
- jet ski activity - the Police were working with the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and Coastguard but intelligence gathering was key to tackling the problem; and
- a Parish Councillor thanked CI Rogers for the work his team had done on the Thistle Hill estate, the Police Liaison Officer and Police Community Support Officers had been excellent and the Parish Council would like their input to continue. CI Roger said he would feed that back.

With reference to the response provided by KCC about Leysdown Children's Centre, this was challenged by some Parish Councillors who stated it was not open when it was supposed to be. The Chairman suggested this should be taken up with KCC.

Further concerns were expressed about the flooding at Warden which was not just happening at the Village Hall. The response provided by the Environment Agency did not offer any solutions. The Head of Commissioning, Environment and Leisure confirmed that the Cabinet Member for Environment would write a letter to the EA expressing dismay.

70.1 Public Forum

A question was asked about progress on the proposals to install public toilets at Beachfields, Sheerness. The Head of Commissioning, Environment and Leisure advised that Cabinet had allocated funding for this project. It was anticipated they should be installed by Spring 2022.

A Parish Councillor asked for an update on what SBC were doing to combat child poverty on the Island. The Chairman responded that an answer to this question would be provided at a later date once he had consulted with officers.

A question was asked about the green areas in Minster on Sea, in particular Scrapsgate and the definition of boundaries and protection of wildlife. The Head of Commissioning, Environment and Leisure said he would consult with the Greenspaces Team and provide an update.

A member of the public said that joined up thinking was needed to tackle the transport issues on the Island. Previously there was a KCC forum on this which was very effective but no longer taking place. He asked if this was something the Area Committee would take on. The KCC Divisional Member for Sheppey said he would make enquiries about the forum and feed back to the Committee.

A question was asked about recent changes to Licensing rules at SBC which make it very difficult for creative activities to take place in town centres. The Chairman agreed to look into this and feedback to the Committee.

A resident commented that public's concerns might not always be heard when a planning application was considered. The Chairman agreed to take this up with officers with a view to providing information on the issues that could be considered in determining a planning application.

A question was asked about the progress of the replacement footbridge at Barton's Point. The Head of Commissioning, Environment and Leisure advised that the bridge was being fabricated and it was hoped it would be installed towards the end of July 2021.

71.1 Local issues

No local issues were raised.

72.1 Update on Area Committee Review

The Chairman who sat on the Area Committee Review Working Group gave an update on the progress of the Review. The Working Group were finalising their report which would be presented to the Committee Chairs. The Vice-Chairman who also sat on the Review Working Group said that they had put together good recommendations for moving forward.

73.1 Future funding

The Chairman advised that the Sheerness Toilets would be funded by the Sheppey Improvement Fund.

As the Working Group had recommended that Area Committees considered what their funding ambitions and priorities were for the year ahead, it was suggested that Members forward any ideas to the Chairman and the Area Committees Coordinator by Friday 23 July so a proposals report could be put together and considered at the September meeting.

74.1 Matters referred to Committee by Cabinet

No issues were raised.

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No issues were raised.

Chairman

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