
SHEPPEY AREA COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held at The Criterion, Blue Town, 69 High Street, Sheerness, Kent ME12 1RW on Tuesday, 15 March 2022 from 7.00 pm - 8.00 pm.

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

NOMINATED PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES: Parish/Town Councillors Linda Brinklow (Sheerness TC), Mike Brown (Eastchurch PC), Evelyn Howell, (Leysdown PC), Pat Sandle (Warden PC), Brian Spoor (Sheerness TC), and Dolley White (Sheerness TC and Minster-on-Sea PC).

OFFICERS PRESENT: Janet Dart and Joanne Johnson.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Roger Truelove.

Kent County Councillor Andy Booth, Divisional Member for Sheppey.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Elliott Jayes and Padmini Nissanga.

677 **EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chairman read out the emergency evacuation procedure.

678 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared.

679 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 30 November 2021 (Minute Nos. 450 – 458) and the Extraordinary Meeting held on 8 February 2022 (Minute Nos. 575 – 578) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as correct records.

680 **MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Members noted the progress on actions.

681 **LEVELLING-UP FUND**

The Head of Regeneration and Economic Development gave a verbal update on the progress of the Levelling-Up Fund bid following the presentation at the Extraordinary Sheppey Area Committee Meeting on 8 February 2022.

She advised that there had been an outstanding response to the consultation and she confirmed that the following items were recommended for inclusion in the bid:

- Soft play;
- town centre gateways;
- an increased emphasis on history and heritage and natural assets, including connectivity with the sea;
- focussing the Master's House studios towards arts & culture; and
- embracing, if practical, the possibility of bringing the SS Montgomery masts on shore.

She also advised that following the consultation, it was clear that residents wanted public toilets and café facilities at Beachfields and this would be included in the bid. Although there was a lot of support for a tidal pool, it was not feasible to achieve within the timeframe of the Levelling-Up Fund. However, a safe swimming zone at Sheerness would be supported again this summer.

The feedback had been passed to the master planners who would look at what was most desired and feasible and their report was expected within the next few weeks.

A discussion ensued and comments made included:

- To allow residents from more remote parts of the Isle of Sheppey to access the facilities at Beachfields, public transport would need to be provided;
- concerned about how safe the swimming zone would be for inexperienced swimmers; and
- the tidal pool in the area was requested by many residents and East Kent College had said they would be prepared to assist with a feasibility study. Warden, Leysdown and Queenborough would also be potential locations for a tidal pool.

The Head of Regeneration and Economic Development thanked everyone for their feedback.

682 PUBLIC FORUM

Jenny Hurkett welcomed everyone to the Criterion Blue Town of which she was the founder. She thanked the Sheppey Area Committee Members for their support with getting the lift installed which would allow more visitors to access the venue. She added that to cater for the numbers of people who were interested in visiting The Criterion from as far away as Sussex and Essex, the area needed coach parking and asked for an update on what provision was planned.

Jenny Hurkett spoke about the walking tours the Criterion held and highlighted the appalling state of the historic area. She asked what could be done to improve Blue Town.

Sheerness Town Councillor Brian Spoor spoke about the planning application for a cement works and the potential health risks for residents. The Chairman responded the project was a clinker crushing facility which would not discharge dust into the air. He advised residents to read the planning application to get a full understanding of what was planned.

A resident advised that the road markings Kent County Council (KCC) had painted at Leysdown Coastal Park were not correct. He also asked if there was a plan to change the speed limit on the road to Shellness. The Chairman suggested the resident contact the KCC Councillor for the area to deal with the issue.

Eastchurch Parish Councillor Mike Brown asked what was being done about the large number of lorries dumping material over Eastchurch Cliffs. Councillor Cameron Beart advised that an Enforcement Notice had been issued for Surf Crescent and the local MP had taken the matter up with the Secretary of State. KCC Councillor Andy Booth said that the matter was being dealt with by the Police.

Sheerness Town Councillor Linda Brinklow and Warden Parish Councillor Pat Sandle both spoke about the KCC consultation on the proposed savings for the Supported Bus Services and asked how residents living on the East of the Isle of Sheppey would be able to access facilities in Sheerness on a Sunday if the subsidy was withdrawn. The Chairman advised that if there was demand for the service, then it would be economically viable for the bus providers to run services on Sundays.

683 LOCAL ISSUES TO BE RAISED

Sheerness Town Councillor Brian Spoor commented that the blocked drains in Sheerness were not being cleared by KCC. A Committee Member advised that if the exact location of the blocked drains was reported to KCC, they would clear them.

Warden Parish Councillor Pat Sandle thanked the Head of Environment & Leisure for arranging the site meeting with the Environment Agency. However, she felt that the update provided in the agenda pack did not mention the effect flooding had on the road. The road could become completely covered and it was not possible to tell the difference between the road and river as there were no warning signs. She said that the edge of the road also needed to be marked.

Councillor Bill Tatton asked what could be done about e-scooters being used at Leysdown and Warden Bay. The Chairman advised that each incident should be reported to the Police by calling 101.

A member of the public asked for an update on the traveller sites, she was advised that the one at Blue Town had been reported and the one at Cromwell Road was on KCC land and KCC were tolerating it.

684 UPDATE ON WORK PLAN - TO INCLUDE FUNDING ALLOCATIONS FOR 2021-22

The Sheppey Area Committee was allocated a total of £56,000.00 for the financial year 2021/22. At the Sheppey Area Committee Meeting on Tuesday 30 November 2021, £47,951.26 of funding was awarded to bids which met the criteria set out by the Committee. At that meeting, Committee Members agreed that a second funding round should take place to allocate the remaining funding of £8,048.74.

The deadline for the second round of applications was 1 February 2022 and a single bid of £8,048.74 was submitted for consideration by the Committee. The application was assessed for eligibility by officers and a scoring process carried out. Officers submitted 2 options for allocating funds for the Committee to vote on, as set out on pages 19 to 20 of the report.

On being put to the vote the proposal for Option 1 was agreed.

Resolved:

That the £8,048.74 funding be awarded to the Member bid submitted by Councillors Oliver Eakin and Angela Harrison to replace the lighting along Sheerness Promenade.

685 MATTERS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE BY CABINET

No issues were raised.

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Chairman

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