
COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC GROWTH AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Virtual Meeting held Via Skype on Tuesday, 6 July 2021 from 7.00 pm - 8.06 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Cameron Beart, Roger Clark, Mike Dendor, Simon Fowle, Tim Gibson, Alastair Gould, James Hall, James Hunt, Denise Knights, Peter Macdonald, Eddie Thomas, Ghlin Whelan and Corrie Woodford.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Billy Attaway, David Clifford, Charlotte Hudson, Jo Millard, Kieren Mansfield, Emma Wiggins.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Steve Davey, Oliver Eakin, Angela Harrison (Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing) , Alan Horton Elliott Jayes, Richard Palmer (Cabinet Member for Communities), Hannah Perkin, Ken Rowles and David Simmons.

133 INTRODUCTION

The Senior Democratic Services Officer welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that Councillor Paul Stephen had replaced Councillor Richard Darby on the committee.

134 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Members agreed to nominate Councillor Corrie Woodford to be elected as Chairman for the Municipal Year 2021/22, to be confirmed at the next in-person meeting.

135 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Members agreed to nominate Councillor Tony Winckless to be elected as Vice-Chairman for the Municipal Year 2021/22, to be confirmed at the next in-person meeting.

136 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

137 ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE AND SCOPE OF THE PORTFOLIOS

The Head of Policy, Communications & Customer Services gave a brief overview of the role and purpose of the Cabinet Advisory Committees. He referred to the Member briefing session on the committee system delivered in June 2021 and said that the advisory committees could be seen as a precursor to the committee system but could also be seen as more specialised versions of the old Policy, Development Review Committee (PDRC).

The Director of Regeneration drew attention to an error on the report, advising that public toilets did not fall into the Economy and Property portfolio.

In response to a question from a Member on Special Responsibility Allowance for Cabinet Advisory Committee chair, the Head of Policy, Communications & Customer Services advised that conventionally the allowance would be considered by the Remuneration Panel once the roles had bedded-in.

The Head of Policy, Communications & Customer Services clarified that committees would consider Cabinet reports and as the Cabinet Advisory Committee meetings were held less frequently than Cabinet, some reports would contain extensive information whilst others might be a summary to provide a steer for discussion for items coming up.

The Head of Policy, Communications & Customer Services referred to the committee's terms of reference and said that he expected Cabinet to ask Cabinet Advisory Committees to consider items outside of the Forward Plan.

138 COMMUNITY RENEWAL FUND

The Director of Regeneration introduced the UK Community Renewal Fund update and that said whilst some information might already be known, the update provided a brief on current areas of work that would be built upon.

The Economy and Community Services Manager highlighted the short deadlines to put projects forward and said that all projects must have completed spend by March 2022. This had restricted applicants to those with capacity and resource, able to submit and deliver large projects quickly. He said that of the 22 projects submitted to Kent County Council (KCC), 11 projects were shortlisted to Government which would advise which would be supported by the end of July 2021 onwards.

The Director of Regeneration and Economy and Community Services Manager responded to questions.

The Economy and Community Services Manager advised that the funding was a one-off and intended as a forerunner to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which was anticipated to come forward from April 2022. If it followed previous grant funding models, there would be a longer run-in to prepare for this next funding opportunity.

Referring to the timing of quarterly Cabinet Advisory Committee meetings, a Member said that updates could be emailed to Members rather than wait until the next meeting. The Economy and Community Services Manager suggested that Cabinet Members could provide information updates in between quarterly meetings. The Head of Policy, Communication & Customer Services agreed to discuss this suggestion with Cabinet Members.

139 LEVELLING UP FUND

The Director of Regeneration introduced the update on the Levelling up Fund, drawing particular attention to paragraphs 9 and 10 which sought Members' views on suitable projects to develop.

The Economy and Community Services Manager gave a summary of the bidding process. He highlighted that bids which were submitted in the first round had to be

already well-developed and second round bids allowed for more time for the complex process. The Economy and Community Services Manager explained that costly external expertise might be necessary if a fully developed business case for a bid was required. The Director of Regeneration highlighted that Swale had been identified as a priority area for investment due to areas of deprivation.

Members made suggestions and comments including:

- Isle of Sheppey had lots of potential;
- suggested development of marina at Queenborough;
- suggested joined up working with other companies such as Peel Ports at Sheerness Docks;
- officers should expand on smaller bids that had previously been unsuccessful;
- was the work on previous bids that included costly consultants still available?;
- previous consultancy work produced the Sheerness and West Sheppey Regeneration Framework, which was not progressed;
- suggested projects similar to the Rushenden Retrofit project;
- West Sheppey Regeneration scheme was not progressed after previous expensive consultancy work;
- suggested Rushenden Retrofit project;
- suggested transport schemes such as Lower Road, Sheppey and Northern Relief Road;
- Klondyke at Queenborough was already a working harbour that could be developed;
- referred to Heritage Lottery funding to run down properties in Thanet in Conservation Areas;
- suggested regeneration of train stations such as parking for customers and a parkway station around the area of the Swale halt; and
- suggested projects on seagrass meadows and projects linked to wildlife habitat and climate change.

In response, the Economy and Community Services Manager said that working with Peel Ports (PP) had potential but SBC would need to consider if a joint bid was compliant with subsidy control and whether PP would be prepared to provide the resource in the timescale. He said that he could use information from previous work and bids as required. The Economy and Community Services Manager said he needed to meet with Homes England to discuss any opportunity at Queenborough and Rushenden Regeneration.

The Director of Regeneration said that the funding criteria and how it linked to net zero would be considered as well as historical information gathered in relation to the Rushenden Retrofit project.

The Director of Regeneration and the Economy and Community Services Manager thanked Members for their ideas and input.

Chairman

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