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## **EASTERN AREA COMMITTEE**

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**MINUTES** of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT on Thursday, 3 February 2022 from 7.00 pm - 8.40 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillors Lloyd Bowen, Alastair Gould, Mike Henderson, Carole Jackson, Denise Knights (Chairman), Ben J Martin, Julian Saunders (Vice-Chairman), David Simmons, Eddie Thomas, Tim Valentine and Mike Whiting.

**NOMINATED PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES:** Parish/Town Councillors Louise Bareham (Faversham TC), Carol Clayson (Boughton under Blean PC), Susan Elworthy (Newnham PC, remotely), Beverley Ferrell (Oare PC, remotely), Andrew Keel (Ospringe PC, remotely), Julien Speed (Lynsted with Kingsdown PC, remotely), Alan Stewart (Graveney with Goodnestone PC, remotely).

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Billy Attaway, Janet Dart, Larissa Reed and Graeme Tuff.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillors Roger Clark, Mike Dendor, Hannah Perkin, Ken Rowles (all remotely).

Kent County Councillor Rich Lehmann, Divisional Member for Swale East (remotely).

**APOLOGY:** Councillor Hannah Perkin.

### **566 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chairman read out the emergency evacuation procedure.

### **567 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors Mike Henderson, Carole Jackson, Ben J Martin, Julian Saunders and Eddie Thomas disclosed a non-pecuniary interest as they all sat on Faversham Town Council.

Councillors Alastair Gould, Julian Saunders and Mike Whiting disclosed a non-pecuniary interest as they submitted a Member Bid, reference EAC013.

### **568 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 September 2021 (Minute Nos. 290 - 302) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **569 MATTERS ARISING**

Members noted the progress on actions.

Councillor Julian Saunders gave a verbal update on the flooding issues raised at the September 2021 meeting. He referred to Appendix 1 in the agenda pack which

gave an update on the meeting Helen Whately MP had set-up on 12 November 2021 involving Southern Water (SW), relevant agencies and residents, with particular reference to the Whitstable Road, Faversham flooding. The update also summarised subsequent meetings that took place including visits within the catchment area to inspect outfalls etc. SW issued a note summarising the findings and actions following the inspection which could be made available to Committee Members if they wished to see it. With regards to Whitstable Road, although they did not visit the area they did discuss it and concluded that the Recreation Ground was not a major contributor to the flooding. Kent County Council (KCC) had the site on their forward works programme for consideration for further measures to reduce risk of flooding in consultation with SW as necessary. Helen Whately proposed to hold a follow-up meeting to keep the pressure on SW.

The KCC Divisional Member for Sittingbourne North advised that SW had made a presentation to KCC and had a copy of a document he was happy to share.

A question from a resident, Robin Bowyer, was read-out in his absence and the Greenspaces Manager responded to the points raised. He explained what work had been carried out and the testing had proved the measures were effective. However, there was still a level of water going to Whitstable Road. Discussions with KCC had taken place to try and resolve the issue.

The KCC Divisional Member for Swale East commented that at present, agencies were guessing what the problem was, it would be better to carry out a study to identify the cause of flooding.

Councillor Ben J Martin proposed to invite Southern Water to a future Eastern Area Committee meeting and ask that someone with specific knowledge of Faversham attended to explain what their plans were to resolve the flooding issues in Faversham. This was seconded by Councillor Mike Whiting and being put to a vote the proposal was agreed.

Councillor Mike Whiting proposed that the Cabinet Member for Environment be asked to write to Kent County Council and Southern Water to request they find a way to resolve the flooding issues at Whitstable Road, Faversham. This was seconded by Councillor David Simmons and being put to a vote the proposal was agreed.

**Resolved:**

- 1) That Southern Water be invited to a future Eastern Area Committee Meeting to explain what their plans were to resolve the flooding issues in Faversham.**
- 2) That the Cabinet Member for Environment be asked to write to Kent County Council and Southern Water to request they find a way to resolve the flooding issues at Whitstable Road, Faversham.**

**570 PUBLIC FORUM**

No issues were raised.

**571 LOCAL ISSUES TO BE RAISED**

A Member raised the issue of the culvert being blocked at Tonge Golf Centre and asked if officers could take this matter up with relevant authorities and report back to the Committee.

A Member mentioned that the Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) were very active and doing a good job in the Eastern Area and asked if they could be asked to submit a report on the issues they dealt with to the Committee periodically. The Interim Area Committees Coordinator agreed to follow this up.

A Member advised that on Friday 4 February 2022, a consultation was opening regarding reducing the speed limit on the Ashford Road from 40 mph to 30 mph should anyone wish to comment.

Further to the defibrillator grant scheme, a Member asked if it was possible for a report or map to be produced showing where they were available for public use in the Eastern Area. This would highlight areas where there were gaps and the Committee could consider if this was something they wanted to address in the future. It was suggested that information be collected on who was responsible to maintain the defibrillators. It was agreed by Members that officers would carry out the work to collect information on the location of defibrillators in the Eastern Area along with information on who maintained them and bring this back to a future meeting.

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

The Chairman explained that as the Committee had not previously allocated any of the 2021-22 funding, there was £48,000.00 available to allocate. £33,246.00 of bids were received.

In-line with the procedure agreed by the Area Committees Review Working Group, officers assessed the applications for eligibility and carried out a scoring process, based on the criteria set out in the application guidance notes. This was to ensure that the process was impartial and as objective as practicable. Officers produced a report summarising the process and recommended all applications receive full funding.

Members discussed the bidding process and some felt that there had not been enough publicity of the funding scheme. There was also a discussion regarding applications from precepting authorities and if they should be allowed to bid. The Chairman responded that the Area Committees Review Working Group was still in existence and could be asked to consider the points raised.

Councillor Mike Whiting proposed and Councillor David Simmons seconded a proposal that the following funding be allocated to each project:

Green Cube CIC, flowering up Teynham village project - £2,870.00

Member bid, Councillors Gould, Saunders and Whiting, public consultation on local bus services - £10,000.00

Doddington Parish Council, Wickstead Simba toddler multiplay - £5,000.00  
Faversham Town Council, Swale Eastern Area Park and Pedal project - £7,796.00  
Faversham Town Council, bike hanger supply and installation - £7,580.00

On being put to the vote the proposal was agreed.

**Resolved:**

- 1) That £33,246.00 funding be awarded to projects in the following proportions:**
  - a) Green Cube CIC, flowering up Teynham village project - £2,870.00**
  - b) Member bid, Councillors Gould, Saunders and Whiting, public consultation on local bus services - £10,000.00**
  - c) Doddington Parish Council, Wickstead Simba toddler multiplay - £5,000.00**
  - d) Faversham Town Council, Swale Eastern Area Park and Pedal project - £7,796.00**
  - e) Faversham Town Council, bike hanger supply and installation - £7,580.00**

The Committee were asked to consider how they would like the remaining £14,754.00 to be allocated. The Chairman noted that £13,470.00 of late external applications had already been received and would need to go through the assessment process before being brought back to the March 2022 meeting. There was some debate about late bids and if they should be allowed. Members also discussed if the remaining funds should be allocated or if they should be used as a saving for the taxpayer.

Councillor Mike Whiting left the meeting at 20:28.

The Chairman proposed that the two late bids received to-date, along with any that were received by 17 February 2022, should go forward for assessment and then back to the March 2022 Eastern Area Committee Meeting to be voted on. Councillor Mike Henderson seconded the proposal.

On being put to the vote the proposal was agreed.

**Resolved:**

- 2) That the two late bids received to date along with any that were received by 17 February 2022, should go forward for assessment and then back to the March 2022 Area Committee to be voted on.**

**573 MATTERS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE BY CABINET**

No issues were raised.

**574 MATTERS REFERRED TO CABINET BY COMMITTEE**

Members agreed that the following items were referred to Cabinet by Committee:

- 1) That the Cabinet Member for Environment write to Kent County Council and Southern Water to find a way to resolve the flooding issues in the Eastern Area;
- 2) that the points raised regarding the process for allocating funding be referred to the Area Committees Review Working Group; and
- 3) that officers carry out work to collect information on the location of defibrillators in the Eastern Area along with information on who maintained them, and that information be considered at a future meeting.

Chairman

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