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## REGENERATION AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

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**MINUTES** of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT on Thursday, 7 July 2022 from 7.01 pm - 7.53 pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Cameron Beart, Monique Bonney (Chair), Lloyd Bowen, Richard Darby, James Hall, Angela Harrison, James Hunt, Peter Marchington, Paul Stephen, Sarah Stephen (Vice-Chair), Eddie Thomas, Roger Truelove, Tim Valentine and Tony Winckless (Substitute for Councillor Simon Clark).

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Philippa Davies and Joanne Johnson.

**OFFICERS PRESENT (Virtually):** Mike Knowles, Kellie MacKenzie and Kieren Mansfield.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillor Simon Fowle.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE (Virtually):** Councillor Ken Rowles.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Simon Clark and Mike Whiting.

### 179 **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

The Chair outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

### 180 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 May 2022 (Minute Nos. 14 – 15) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

### 181 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Cameron Beart declared a Disclosable Non-Pecuniary Interest in respect of item 6, Procurement of Provision of the Royal National Lifeboat Institute (RNLI) Lifeguard Service as he was a member of the RNLI and Chair of Sheerness Lifeboat Management Group (RNLI).

### 182 **Handover Report**

The Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property introduced the report which set-out the committee's remit, including the services it had oversight of, and current issues and major pieces of work relevant to that remit. She explained that the majority of functions set-out in paragraph 2.2 of the report were delivered by the Regeneration, Economic Development and Property service, with beach huts, sea fronts, harbours and quays being delivered by Environment and Leisure.

The Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property highlighted the current issues and large pieces of work as set-out in paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4 of the report.

Members made comments and raised the following questions:

- Skill levels in the Borough were critical in making the economy of Swale more prosperous;

- lack of skills made it difficult to attract investment into the Borough;
- it was important to ensure that a mix of employment land was made available;
- the quality of secondary school provision on the Isle of Sheppey needed to be improved;
- the Swale Economic Improvement Plan 2020-2023 and the Swale Visitor Economy Framework and Action Plan 2018-2023, which were due to expire next year, both needed to be reviewed;
- the Beach Hut Policy needed to be looked at by the Committee;
- could the £20m Sheerness Revival Levelling-Up Fund bid be circulated?;
- welcomed discussion on the Blue Flag applications and Barton's Point, Minster; and
- were there any updates on the letting of the final units at Bourne Place, Sittingbourne?

In response to questions, the Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property confirmed that a new Interim Property Services Manager had recently been employed by the Council and the final legal arrangements were in place for the last units to be let at Bourne Place.

In response to some of the points raised, the Chair explained that the Blue Flag applications were under the remit of the Environment and Leisure service; the policies listed above would be reviewed before they expired; work had commenced on the Barton's Point project; and discussion around the Levelling-Up bid.

Members noted the report and agreed that skill levels in the Borough should be considered by the Committee.

**Resolved:**

**(1) That the report be noted and skill levels in the Borough be considered by the Committee.**

**183 Procurement of Provision of RNLI Lifeguard Service**

This report sought the Committee's approval for the two-year extension to the contract to be implemented at the end of the initial contract term on 31 December 2022. The current contract for the RNLI expired on 31 December 2022, with a provision to extend the contract term for a further two years, up to 31 December 2024.

**Resolved:**

**(1) That the extension of the current Lifeguarding Contract with the Royal National Lifeboat Institution from 1 January 2023 for a period of two years at a predicted total value of £106,000, be approved.**

**184 UK Shared Prosperity Fund**

The Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property introduced the report which set-out details regarding the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) from which Swale Borough Council (SBC) had received a funding allocation of £1,169,496. To access this funding, the Council must produce a Local Investment Plan, to be submitted to Government no later than 1 August 2022. She explained that the funding allocation was

based on a matrix of population size (70%) and deprivation measures (30%). The Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property drew Members' attention to the hyperlink in the report which set out guidance on what local authorities could include in their Investment Plan. She highlighted paragraphs 3.9 and 3.10 in the report which referred to the formation of a Member working group and also an external partnership group, which was a requirement of the fund.

Members made comments and raised the following questions:

- It was unfortunate that there was such a tight deadline for producing the Local Investment Plan;
- there would be more added value to the distribution of funds if they were given to schemes that funds had already been committed to, such as to town centres;
- delegation to officers and to the Chair was essential due to the time constraints;
- consideration needed to be given on whether the funding went to town centres specifically or wider areas, however acknowledged that sometimes outlying areas were more prosperous;
- noted that the Member working group would be made up from one Member from each group, but this excluded Members who were ungrouped, all members needed to be involved;
- requested that all Members be sent a copy of the Local Investment Plan before it was submitted to Government;
- Queenborough Town Council should be included within the external partnership group;
- how were the business representatives on the external partnership group selected?;
- there should be representation from the unparished areas of Halfway and Milton Regis;
- acknowledged the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) were represented, but not all parish councils were members of KALC; and
- suggested a 'call-out' be made to invite parish councils to join the group.

The Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property confirmed that membership of the Member working group was: Councillors Monique Bonney, James Hall, Mike Henderson, Bill Tatton, Roger Truelove, Tim Valentine and Mike Whiting. She responded to the points raised and explained that: the business representatives had not been agreed yet; there was a balance on speed and size on who was included in the external partnership group, bearing in mind the tight deadline; the Member working group was meeting on 8 July 2022, subject to its approval by the Committee, with arrangements for the external partnership group to be advised.

Councillor James Hunt moved the following motion: That ungrouped Members should also be invited to sit on the Member working group. This was seconded by Councillor Cameron Beart. On being put to the vote the motion was lost.

***Resolved:***

***(1) That it be agreed to prioritise interventions and outcomes which best supported delivery of the Council's adopted strategy framework and agreed member priorities.***

**(2) That it be agreed that the Council seek to broadly allocate funding across Faversham, Sittingbourne and the Isle of Sheppey, taking account of population and deprivation on a 70:30 basis.**

**(3) That the political membership of the Member Working Group and the Local Panel be agreed.**

**(4) That the submission of the final Local Investment Plan be delegated to the Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property, in consultation with the Chair of the Regeneration and Property Committee.**

185 **Forward Decisions Plan**

The Chair said the following topics would be scheduled for future meetings:

- Skill levels in the Borough;
- the repair of St. Michael's Church wall in Sittingbourne;
- the old library in Sheerness which was not part of the Levelling-Up fund;
- Barton's Point, Minster; and
- the Beach Hut Policy.

Members requested that there be an update on Master's House, Sheerness and the refurbishment of Swale House and that Queenborough Guildhall should be considered. There was some discussion on whether items should be reported back to the Committee with any updates.

The Chair advised that updates would be shared at the appropriate time and in-line with the Committee's remit.

***Resolved:***

***(1) That the report be noted, and the items listed above be considered at future meetings of the Committee.***

Chair

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