

Community Committee Handover Report

1. Relevant Corporate Plan Objectives

The most relevant priority is;

Priority 3:

Tackling deprivation and creating equal opportunities for everyone

- 3.1 Undertake targeted interventions to identify our most disadvantaged families and communities, improve our understanding of the issues they face, and develop new ways of working to reduce social exclusion and enhance opportunities and quality of life.
- 3.2 Develop a communitarian approach to partnership working based on shared objectives with like-minded agencies in the voluntary and community sectors.
- 3.3 Ensure that the council plays a proactive role in reducing crime and antisocial behaviour, including through the modernisation of CCTV provision.
- 3.4 Promote wellbeing and enjoyment of life by signposting and encouraging a wide range of sporting, cultural and other leisure activities appropriate and accessible to each age group.

However, there is also relevance to priority 4 with car parking being a key element of helping the Council to reduce dependence Government funding.

2. Key Policies and Strategies

- Playing Pitch Strategy
- Open Spaces and Play Strategy
- Built Facilities Strategy (in development)
- Community Safety Strategy
- Public Space CCTV Policy

3. Key Functions and Staffing

The list below gives a high-level list of functions that will be covered by this committee.

- inclusivity and tackling disadvantage;
- crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour;
- CCTV;
- Culture
- Leisure and sport
- Play areas and outdoor fitness equipment
- voluntary and community sector;
- liaison with town and parish councils;
- parking;
- heritage and conservation, including closed churchyards and

- to act as the Council's crime and disorder (overview and scrutiny) committee for the purposes of and with the powers set out in the Police and Justice Act 2006, the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and any regulations made under those Acts.

Staffing is split across two Head of Service portfolios. Key Management contacts are as shown:

- Martyn Cassell – Head of Environment and Leisure
- Jay Jenkins – Leisure and Technical Services Manager
- Jeff Kitson – Parking Services Manager, Mid Kent Parking Services
- Charlotte Hudson – Head of Housing and Communities
- Community Development Manager (currently vacant)
- Steph Curtis – Community Safety Manager
- Della Fackrell – Resilience Manager

4. Success Highlights

Community Safety

- Bringing Public Space CCTV Monitoring service in-house in April 20, creating brand new-control centre and upgrading all of existing camera network.
- The CCTV service has returned to 24/7/365 monitoring in November 21, installation of CCTV at Leysdown in July 21 and installation of cameras at Milton Creek Country Park.
- Review of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) to tackle alcohol related ASB in Sittingbourne, Sheerness, Faversham and Leysdown; and the installation of a new gated alleyway scheme, in late 2020.
- Through the Community Safety Partnership:
 - Delivery of location based 'focus area' work to provide a multi-agency response to those hotspot locations with an increase in ASB and Crime. Between May 19 and May 22 this has included a response at Murston, Thistle Hill and Sittingbourne and Sheerness Town centres.
 - Coordination of response across partner agencies to support victims of domestic abuse. This has included the provision of face-to-face drop-ins and One Stop Shops; ensuring provision of support for perpetrators; and identifying and seeking to tackle known gaps in services. This also included concentrated work to ensure access to face-to-face provision during the covid-19 pandemic.
 - From November 21, development, and delivery of a series of actions to seek to tackle violence against women and girls.
 - Delivery of the multi-agency vulnerability panel which ensures an appropriate response to adults that are or are at risk of becoming victims of crime/ASB; are self-neglecting or have complex needs and are struggling to engage with services.

COVID Response

- Immediate response to covid-19 pandemic through the creation of a community response in March 20. Initially this response saw the creation of locality-based hubs to ensure food and other support to those that were most vulnerable. This response progressed to signposting of support to these community members which continued throughout the 2020 and early 2021.
- COVID DEFRA Hardship Grants delivered:
 - 17 households received discretionary housing payments
 - 40 households supported through housing options/rough sleeper funding.
 - 1430 food boxes were distributed, the equivalent of 57,200 meals.
 - Funding was also provided to a range of voluntary groups to provide additional support within the community.
- Winter Grants schemes delivered:
- 1,625 total unique households supported (excluded households receiving repeat support).
 - 1,391 unique households with children supported.
 - 232 unique individuals/households without children supported.

- 2,570 essential food boxes distributed to households (approx. total of £66,791.99).
- 91 white goods appliances distributed to households (approx. total of £19,800.00).
- 667 food vouchers (ranging from £5 - £100 in value) distributed to households (approx. total of £7,067.98).
- 55 fuel vouchers and 130 household essentials distributed to households (approx. total of £7,569.60).
- Self-isolation support fund delivered
- Housing Support Fund delivered:
 - 683 households supported inc. 505 with children

Community

- Completion and Asset Transfer of The Mill Skatepark.
- Support for Barge Museum and Raybel Charters on development of projects.
- 20's Festival delivered.
- Murston Old Church project supported.
- Foodbank grants and co-ordination work.
- Summer Festival (sheerness) and Festival of Light Sittingbourne
- Support to the Faversham Hop Festival online eCommerce website
- Range of Community and Member grant schemes delivered.
- Delivery of Reconnect Programme
- Delivery of Remembrance Service 2021
- Sheppey Community Bus
- Support with Census engagement
- Town Centre Radio taken in-house monitored via the CCTV team/control Room
- Communities Fund and Improvement and Resilience Fund various projects supported
- Homes for Ukraine scheme co-ordination

Leisure centres

- Support to keep the leisure centres operational throughout as much of the pandemic as was allowed.
- Replacement of leisure centre roof at Swallows

Playgrounds

- Refurbishments completed at 12 playground sites with another 11 agreed for 2022-23.
- New equipment installed at Festival Fields, Sheerness, Kemsley Rec, Warden Village hall, Johnson Gardens, Sittingbourne, Diligent Drive, Sittingbourne and Grove Park, Sittingbourne.

On and Off-street Parking

- Awarded contract for replacement of all pay and display machines in car parks – the new machines bring a wider range of payment methods to suit all residents.

- A number of car park improvements – improved lighting at Albany Road, Sittingbourne, new disabled bays across Faversham and Sheppey
- Support for care workers and NHS workers through free parking throughout the pandemic
- Expanded EV charging network
- Establishment of the new Multi-storey car park in Sittingbourne

5. Current Workload / Significant Issues

Current workload

- Day to day management of on-street parking and enforcement (traffic regulations, resident parking schemes, disabled bays), off-street car parking management and enforcement
- Car Park 'pay and display' machine replacement project
- Playground inspection, maintenance and improvement
- Leisure centre contract management
- Planning for a new Leisure centre contract – April 2025
- Leisure facility improvements – Levelling up bid for Sheerness
- Providing the evidence for leisure and sport in the local plan – playing pitch and built facilities strategies
- Closed churchyard inspection and maintenance
- Day to day management of CCTV and multi-storey carpark.
- Development of town centre radio scheme.
- Management of Swale Community Safety Partnership.
- Multi-agency Community Safety Unit management.
- Domestic Abuse co-ordination.
- Administration of Household Support Fund.
- Youth Forum.
- Administration of Member and Community Grant scheme.

Significant issues

- Delivery of Social inclusion work programme/ Cost of Living Crisis
- Kent County Council Community services review.
- Ageing Leisure facilities vs growth of the population

6. Forward Plan Decisions

- Lynsted churchyard wall
- Playground refurbishment contract awards (above contract standing orders threshold)
- Future coach parking in Sheerness
- Community Safety Strategy (January 2023)
- Public Space CCTV Policy (March 2023)
- Community Bus Pilot Options (October 2022)