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Reference:  
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Dear All

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - MONDAY, 11TH JUNE, 2018**

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at next Monday's, 11th June, 2018 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the following item that was unavailable when the agenda was printed.

<b>Agenda No</b>	<b>Item</b>
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<b>3</b>	<b>Minutes of Previous Meetings (Pages 3 - 14)</b>
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Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting dated 9 April 2018. The Chairman will move that the minutes of the previous meeting be signed as a correct record. The only issue relating to the minutes that can be discussed is their accuracy.  
**Procedure rules applicable to all meetings Part 4, section 6.**

Kind regards,

**Name**

Nick Peeters (Scrutiny and Performance Officer)

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## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Monday, 9 April 2018**

**Present: Councillor Tom Dawlings (Chair)**  
**Councillors Hills (Vice-Chairman), Chapelard, Hannam, Hill, Huggett, Ms Palmer,**  
**Stewart, Uddin and Woodward**

**Officers in Attendance:** Paul Taylor (Director of Change and Communities), Stephen Baughen (Building Control & Planning Policy Manager), Terry Hughes (Community Safety Manager) and Gary Stevenson (Head of Environment and Street Scene)

**Other Members in Attendance:** Councillor Lynne Weatherly

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

OSC63/15     Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gray and Mackonochie.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

OSC64/15     There were no declarations of interest made, within the provisions of the Code of Conduct for Members.

### MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

OSC65/15     The minutes of the meetings dated 12 February 2018 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the Committee meeting dated 12 February 2018 be agreed.

### ITEMS CALLED IN UNDER OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULE 13

OSC66/15     There were no items which had been called-in under Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 13.

### CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

OSC67/15     The Chair confirmed the order of the agenda.

### PORTFOLIO HOLDER PLANS AND PROGRESS - COMMUNITIES AND WELLBEING

OSC68/15     The Portfolio Holder for Communities and Wellbeing, Councillor Lynne Weatherly, updated Members on her Portfolio. Councillor Weatherly advised the Committee that she wanted her portfolio and the good work being done by officers to achieve a higher profile. Councillor Weatherly highlighted the following areas:

#### **The Healthy Lifestyles Team**

- A new service technically started in January for reporting purposes had evolved in the last year from static weight loss to a more holistic model, putting the client's needs first. This generated referrals to the Housing teams and Citizens Advice Bureaux to address the wider determinants of health that were not picked up previously.

- 60 holistic assessments were conducted on residents, highlighting some high need cases that were not getting the support needed. This involved multiple agencies including social services, citizen's advice, Fusion leisure centre, the Community Safety Unit and community wardens.
- Case study 1 (tabled) was a referral from a GP for low mood - highlighting how the new service had evolved to address resident's wider needs first before attempting to provide support for a behaviour change the client was not able to influence. Case study 2 (also tabled) showed a more traditional client pathway of a referral to the gym and booking onto a future weight loss course.
- In conjunction with Sevenoaks District Council and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council a West Kent wide database for the One Service had been commissioned and implemented, allowing referrals from clients and health professionals to be received seamlessly. Enabling contact with the client easily using SMS, Email and letters and the sending of automated messages back confirming appointments. The service would improve the ability of professionals to refer to the Healthy Lifestyles Team and receive feedback on how the referral went, providing the client with a smoother pathway on the way to making behaviour changes.
- Through co-ordinating with KCC's online marketing campaign contact with a different demographic of resident was possible. A client at Gateway saw the One You Kent advertised on Facebook and took part in the One You quiz online which then generated a self referral, resulting in his taking part in exercise referral and counterweight. The client lost 6kg/ 7.2% in 12 weeks, became a gym member, going from Inactive to Active.

## **Housing**

- Over the last year the Housing, Property and Facilities teams had been working on getting Dowding House in Paddock Wood refurbished and ready for use as temporary accommodation for homeless families. There would be 25 flats in total – a mixture of studios, one and two bed flats in the main, and one three bedroom flat for a larger family.
- The refurbishment works were due for completion in a few months and the Council would be able to start providing housing for families who currently had to go into emergency housing in other areas such as Eastbourne if they become homeless.
- There would be support provided 9-5, Monday to Friday on site by a company who specialise in supporting residents in temporary housing.
- The plans were to fully furnish a number of the flats (8) for families who come to the Council with nothing (a household who has fled domestic abuse, for example) and other flats would be left empty for residents to furnish themselves. All flats would be provided with cookers and fridges and most of the flats would have washing machines.

## **Homelessness Reduction Act**

- The new legislation came in on 3 April and was considered to be the most significant piece of homelessness law in 40 years. The changes were

welcome as the Act was designed to increase the help available to everyone who found themselves in a homeless situation.

- People approaching the Council for help and advice would be given a personalised housing action plan containing actions for them and their housing adviser and designed to prevent them becoming homeless in the first place. If this was not possible, it would deal with how they could look for alternative accommodation.
- The Council now had a duty to provide specialised advice to people who in the past had found being homeless particularly difficult, including people fleeing domestic abuse, rough sleepers, people leaving care and people being discharged from hospital or prison.
- Private renting would become even more important, and the Housing team continued to build up good relationships with private landlords and letting agents (e.g. the West Kent Landlords' forum last week, held at Sevenoaks DC, which provided an overview of the new legislation for private landlords.)
- The Housing team were anticipating at least a 3 percent increase in workload; however new staff had been recruited and a new IT system was in place to deal with the housing action plans and other records that needed to be maintained under the new legislation

## **Work with homeless people in the borough**

- There had been an increase in rough sleeping in the town over the last year – for the previous three years it was estimated that there were 15 rough sleepers on a particular night in November each year, however, in November 2017, it was 20.
- Councillor Weatherly attended the three-weekly Rough Sleeper meetings which were held at the Town Hall and attended by a large number of the Council's homelessness partners. A number of rough sleepers had been housed in the last few months. At least twelve rough sleepers were housed while the Winter Shelter was running. The Shelters had a positive, caring atmosphere created by the Shelter staff and volunteers. The approach taken by the Shelter, as by the Housing team and their homelessness partners, was to encourage rough sleepers to get off the streets as soon as possible.
- The housing team was developing its work with rough sleepers to include working with other concerned groups and organisations, such as Childrensalon (a local company) who had undertaken their own work to help rough sleepers, and who were now working with the council to look at other ways people in difficult situations could be assisted.

## **Housing Advisory Panel**

- The Housing Advisory Panel has been implemented and would help keep the focus on Housing issues, which were important to our residents' lives. The first meeting of the Panel took place in January and the next meeting was at the end of April. The first two areas of housing the Panel has chosen to focus on were:

- Exploring options for obtaining more affordable housing for the Borough; and
- Ending rough sleeping – looking at what more can be done to achieve this.

## Community Safety Unit

- The following exert from a member of the Housing Team's appraisal was read out to the Committee:

"While walking through the town I met one of the rough sleepers who haven't been engaging with housing department. During the conversation I encouraged him to apply to one of the hostels. I immediately contacted the hostel and completed the application over the phone. He was offered an interview the next day and consequently was accepted. On other occasion I have attended appointment in the bank with a rough sleeper who has an overdraft and his bank card was blocked due to unpaid fees. This prevented him from obtaining bank statement needed for job centre to claim benefits. Due to my intervention all his fines and debt got cancelled."

Members expressed the following views:

Councillor Stewart asked for the reason for the extended delay in occupying Dowding House. Councillor Weatherly said there had been more work than initially anticipated, including the fire regulation requirements in light of the Grenfell Tower disaster.

Councillor Stewart went on to ask why the current regulations were appropriate for the 'guardian tenants' but not for full time tenants. The Director of Change & Communities, Executives & Heads Of Service, Paul Taylor, advised that the regulations were adequate for the guardian tenants but not for full time occupation. Mr Taylor agreed to provide a further update on situation following the meeting.

Councillor Stewart also asked if the Housing Service was preparing a summary of its action plan for dealing with affordable housing. Councillor Weatherly said discussions would be held with social housing providers and there was an officer who supported the providers to ensure that the full number of affordable housing units was provided. Councillor Weatherly added that the Council was doing all it could to influence the key stakeholders.

Councillor Woodward asked about the Fusion package being offered to over 50s. Councillor Weatherly said it was not within her portfolio but the Head of Environment and Street Scene, Gary Stevenson, explained that it part of the 'Go Card' offer which was aimed at residents in receipt of benefits. He added that, nationally, Fusion were looking to provide an off to over 50s.

Councillor Hills asked if there was an assumption that people housed in Dowding House would be rehoused rather than going into B&B accommodation. Councillor Weatherly said that some people might have to go into B&B accommodation and that Dowding House added to the emergency housing the Council was able to provide. Mr Taylor added that the Council's overall priority was to provide accommodation and keep people out of temporary accommodation.

Councillor Hills also asked if the Council's CCTV service had been renewed and whether funding options had been explored. Councillor Weatherly confirmed that the service had been reviewed and as confirmed by the Leader of the Council was to remain active.

Councillor Hill asked what the impact of the new legislation on the Housing Service in terms of staffing was and whether any funding was being provided. Councillor Weatherly advised that the Government had put the onus on local authorities to provide the necessary support and that there would be three additional staff in Housing. She added that, although some central funding was being provided, the Council had to provide approximately £69,000 to meet the legislative requirements.

Councillor Hannam said he applauded the work of the One You service and asked how it interacted with the Citizen's Advice Bureaux. Councillor Weatherly advised that the service was originally intended for dealing with health issues. However, it now looked at the historic reasons for the issues and if these involved elements such as rent arrears, there could be a referral to the CAB.

The Chairman, Councillor Dawlings referred to the Community Land Trust as a potential source of affordable housing and asked whether there were any discussions that involved the Trust. Councillor Weatherly said she was familiar with the Trust's work and the Council was aware of it as a potential partner.

Councillor Uddin referred to the West Kent Health Asset Map and asked if the Council had something similar for the Borough's residents. Councillor Weatherly said a meeting had taken place in the previous year with Broadwater and Sherwood Councillors which identified community assets with the intention of setting up a directory of assets.

**RESOLVED** to note the Portfolio Holder's update.

## COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2018-19

OSC69/15 The Community Safety Manager, Terry Hughes, updated the Committee on the annual Community Safety Partnership report. Mr Hughes highlighted the following:

Despite a headline rise of 25% over the past 12 months, the smallest increase in all 12 Kent areas, Tunbridge Wells remained the safest place in Kent.

### Last year's priorities

**Domestic abuse** – There had been an Increase of 11% which was similar to other local authority areas but still the lowest occurrence of reported domestic abuse crimes in Kent. The repeat rate remained steady at 25% which was similar to other Kent areas, but lower for clients picked up by Domestic Abuse Volunteer Support Services who provide domestic abuse services across West Kent (10% in Q3).

**Road Safety** – There had been a reduction of 65 casualties in 2016 which was the best in 12 Kent areas overall. Data for the period showed reductions

in some categories (pedestrians, over-65s), but an unchanged picture in others (cyclists) and an increase in slight injuries for the under-16s.

**Drugs/Alcohol** – There had been a reduction in possession offences but an increase in dealing offences. It was likely that pro-active policing contributed to the increase in dealing offences, which was positive. Although not favourably positioned within Kent for possession offences fifth is an improvement over previous years.

## **The next 12-months**

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) increased funding by 10% and introduced a tactical pot whereby up to one-third of the fund could be left with the PCC and drawn upon as required. The Strategic Assessment was discussed with partners, our portfolio holder and presented at CSP in February where the following priorities were proposed:

### **Drug Addiction**

Continuation of drug addiction funding from the Council's CSP pot reinforced by PCC money in support of the great work that DAVSS undertakes in Tunbridge Wells. This further supported by a Home Office Grant of £126K for extended support programmes over the next three years.

### **Road Safety**

Although Tunbridge Wells saw a further reduction in casualties during the previous reporting period the latest available figures (mid 2016 - mid2017) showed a rise of 50 casualties and therefore not a clear reduction. Kent Fire and Rescue Service offered to work more closely with the Partnership to address child casualties and the Kent County Council Highways analyst offered assistance in terms of better understanding the picture on Tunbridge Wells's roads.

### **Drugs/Alcohol**

The borough's position in Kent suggested there was more that could be done on this issue. Kenward Trust proposed new positive projects being rolled out across West Kent in addition to the usual outreach work around the town centre and Paddock Wood. To complement this the Partnership would be looking to work more closely with partners in health and education to provide a focus on the risks to physical and mental health. A We're also looking at a Community Alcohol Partnership to address and prevent underage drinking and 18-25 drunkenness. This proposal would be presented to the Partnership in May.

### **Safeguarding**

The Partnership would be in a better position in 2018/19 to focus on this area of vulnerability and was more hopeful of capturing the work undertaken by partners so that gaps could be identified and filled through extra training and assistance with policies and staff/client awareness. The Police and Crime Commissioner's tactical pot could be used to support engagement opportunities, training and deployment of CCTV where appropriate.

Members expressed the following views:

Councillor Woodward referred to the increase in road casualties and asked if the road conditions, particularly the maintenance of road markings, could



have been a factor. Councillor Weatherly confirmed that the road markings were the Kent County Council's responsibility but it did not prevent the Members from chasing the County Council up on the issue.

The Chief Inspector for Tunbridge Wells, Peter Steenhuis, spoke to Members about local policing and highlighted the work in improving the effectiveness of the Police with the current resources, dealing with road safety, and tackling hate crime, domestic abuse, homelessness, and child sexual exploitation and the night time economy.

Members expressed the following views:

Councillor Stewart asked for clarification on the number of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) dedicated to Paddock Wood. She added that there were issue in the Town with graffiti and the use of nitrous oxide (laughing gas) Insp Steenhuis confirmed there would be one additional full-time PCSO in Paddock Wood. Ch Insp Steenhuis was aware of the increase in the use of nitrous oxide and said it was important that a clear message, alerting young people to the dangers of its use, was advertised.

Councillor Uddin expressed concern that the public were still felt unable to report hate crime and asked if there was a strategy for dealing with the issue. Ch Insp Steenhuis highlighted a hate crime reporting poster which the police were distributing. He added that the issue was also being dealt with by the Partnership and information on hate crime groups was shared amongst organisations.

Councillor Hill said that, along with hate crime, there were still obstacle that prevented people from reporting domestic abuse. She added that, overall there were issues with people reporting crime and there were problems with PCSOs covering too large an area and losing an important local connection. Ch Insp Steenhuis recognised that domestic violence was on the increase and this was in large part due to the improved mechanisms that allowed its reporting. He added that the concern would be if there were repeat incidents. He assured Members that Kent Police were doing everything they could to allow it to be reported. He said the reporting of crime over all was now easier and could be done on-line. He went on to say that, although policing numbers had decreased, daily meetings picked up on trends and the Serious Crime Board looked at those who caused the most impact through crime.

Councillor Chapelard asked how many full-time equivalent police officers were available at any one time. Ch Insp Steenhuis confirmed that the minimum requirement was being met on a daily basis and that calls were being responded to. He said that an output of probationary officers would be active in June 2018 and he was making the improvement in numbers a priority.

Councillor Woodward referred the reporting of hate crime and said there was a community group that met in Broadwater who did not have English as a second language and said he would be happy to be a point of contact for the police, with the group.

Councillor Woodward expressed disappointment at the low numbers of domestic abuse offenders who had taken up the offer of support programme. Ch Insp Steenhuis said that each offender was provided with details of the

programme and there was a PCSO dedicated to domestic violence. He said he would like to see the programme included as a direction to offenders.

Councillor Uddin referred to the increase nationally in knife crime and asked what the local trend was. Ch Insp Steenhuis said there was nothing out of trend locally but it was an issue that was constantly monitored.

**RESOLVED** to endorse the Community Safety Partnership Plan for 2018/19.

## **CIVIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE - FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

OSC70/15 The Chairman, Councillor Dawlings, introduced the update and confirmed that Members had received an email with a number of points detailing the progress of the project (tabled at the meeting). Councillor Dawlings was happy with the level of reporting to Overview and Scrutiny on the development and reminded Members that there was a briefing at the next meeting of the Development Advisory Panel, to which all Members were able to attend if they wished.

Councillor Stewart referred to the briefing provided and questioned the timing of the agreement of a preferred contractor in May 2018 for the Civic Development, when the Household Waste/Recycling Contract would not be finalised until August/September, and the saving from the charging for garden waste collection was needed for the development. Councillor Dawlings reminded the Committee that Members had not yet agreed to the introduction of a garden waste charge.

**RESOLVED** to note the update.

## **REVIEW OF THE TUNBRIDGE WELLS LOTTERY**

OSC71/15 The Director of Communities and Change, Paul Taylor, presented the report which provided a seven month review of the Tunbridge Wells Lottery. Mr Taylor confirmed that Tunbridge Wells was the third authority to introduce a local lottery and it had exceeded expectations. He said there were 62 good causes signed up to the project and the most recent weekly sales had been more than 1,300 tickets, with an overall total raised for good causes of £16,000.

Members expressed the following views:

Councillor Woodward asked for confirmation on the top prize for the lottery which was advertised at £25,000. Mr Taylor confirmed that prize was a guaranteed amount and was underwritten by the agents who managed the scheme and was separate to the pot for good causes.

Councillor Chapelard expressed concern at an organisation that was included as a potential grants recipient. Mr Taylor confirmed that the criteria for applying was established fairly across all organisations that were eligible.

Mr Taylor went on to provide a separate update on Community Grants. He confirmed that the Grants Panel had met and would provide a recommendation which would form a report to the relevant portfolio holder, recommending the funding for 2019-2020. Mr Taylor also confirmed that the current three year service level agreement was midway through. Mr Taylor

said he had offered to meet all the grant recipients to explain the recommendation of the Grants Panel and many of them had taken up the offer.

Councillor Stewart asked which committee the report would be considered by. Mr Taylor confirmed that it was a single portfolio holder decision and as such would not go to a committee. He said, however, that it would be a published report and be available to the public and to Members.

Councillor Chapelard expressed concern that, should the lottery be used to fund reductions in the community grants, there would be in deficit by 2021. Mr Taylor said it was correct to state that there would be a deficit but that it had never been stated that the lottery would cover all of the community grant reductions.

**RESOLVED** to note the update.

## REPORT OF THE PLANNING APPLICATION PROCESS TASK AND FINISH GROUP

OSC72/15 Councillor Chris Woodward, Chair of the Planning Application Process Task and Finish Group, presented the Group's final report. Councillor Woodward highlighted the following points:

- The Group had had a number of meetings, met with stakeholders and received input from senior planning officers who had attended all the meetings.
- A number of concerns were expressed by representatives from the town and parish council representatives issued including the weight given to neighbourhood plans, the support provided for paperless planning and the level of consultation between the planning service and local councils.
- Representatives from the Tunbridge Wells Civic Society had been interviewed and referred to the level of detail in planning applications which they felt were insufficient for a response to be provided. The society was also concerned at the number of planning applications delegated to officers for decisions.
- The Group members highlighted the changes to the planning application notification process, which was now electronic, and were keen that the new process did not lose any degradation in terms of the ability for residents to receive notification.
- The Group noted that a training programme for local councils had been reinstated, recognising that there were changes in personnel in those authorities and a refresh needed as a result.
- Broadly speaking the planning application process worked and in general terms the town and parish councils were happy with it.

Members expressed the following views:

Councillor Stewart felt that, on recent occasions, the communication from the Planning Service had been more direction than training. Councillor Woodward considered this an issue that could be noted by Planning. The Building Control and Development manager, Stephen Baughen, explained that the training provided to the town and parish councils was provided by different planning officers. Mr Baughen agreed to feed back Councillor Stewart's concerns to ensure that the training was informative rather than directional.

Councillor Stewart also said that, previously suggested Section 106 training had not been provided and it was important that all Council members received this. Mr Baughen agreed to follow up on this issue.

Councillor Hill said there was a concern within Southborough that the views of residents and the Town Council were not listened to. She added that the Town Council was moving to paperless planning but as the Council did not have a permanent home yet it was difficult to provide the necessary IT infrastructure.

Councillor Huggett said there were instances in Rusthall where planning applications had approved against the wishes of residents and the town council. Councillor Woodward advised that the Chair of Rusthall Parish Council had attended a meeting of the task and finish group but had not raised the issue. Mr Baughen advised that the Parish Council did not access the delegated reports following a planning application being approved and would not be aware of the reasons for decisions. Mr Baughen had attended a meeting of the parish council and explained that the delegated report was the document that explained why a different view would have been reached.

Councillor Dawlings felt that, with the number of neighbourhood plans coming forward, there was a greater interest in, and understanding of, planning issues locally and as such, the review was timely.

Councillor Hills felt that the negotiations for Section 106 funds were better carried out by those with a professional knowledge of the issue. He added that, in terms of decisions, they would always be based on material planning considerations.

Mr Baughen said that discussions had been held and meetings would take place in the future with those town and parish councils that had expressed an interest in neighbourhood plans.

**RESOLVED** to endorse the recommendations in the report.

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

OSC73/15 The Scrutiny and Performance Officer, Nick Peeters, presented the report to members and advised that it summarised the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee over the last year and highlighted aspirations for the year ahead as part of the Committee's work programme. Mr Peeters advised Members that the report was in draft form and Members had an opportunity to input into the document prior to its consideration by Full Council in July.

Councillor Hills took the opportunity to update Members on the responses from stakeholders to the circulation of the Tackling Excessive Speeds in Rural Areas Task and Finish Group report. Councillor Hills said that the DfT

was maintaining the existing policy for the of static speed cameras. He added that the chief inspector in charge of tactical command had urged that the work of the speedwatch groups and the data collected be given weight when deciding where cameras should be sited

**RESOLVED** to endorse the Annual Report for consideration by Full Council.

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

OSC74/15 The Chairman, Councillor Dawlings, advised Members that the same process as in the previous year would be followed in order to decide which topics would be included in the work programme.

**RESOLVED** to note the update on the Committee's work programme.

## **URGENT BUSINESS**

OSC75/15 There was no urgent business.

## **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

OSC76/15 The next scheduled meeting of the Committee would take place on Monday 11 June 2018.

NOTE: The meeting concluded at Time Not Specified.

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