

Strategic Environment Cabinet Committee

Tuesday, 18 June 2019

7.30 pm

Present:

Cllr Brian Sangha (Chair)
Cllr Lauren Sullivan (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: Derek Ashenden
 Conrad Broadley
 Harold Craske
 Brian Francis
 Gary Harding
 Baljit Hayre
 Bob Lane
 Emma Morley

Also in attendance: Cllr John Burden and Cllr Leslie Hills

Hayley Taylor Bird Wise Project Manager

Simon Hookway Assistant Director (Communities)
Wendy Lane Assistant Director (Planning)
Shazad Ghani Planning Manager (Policy)
Chris Wakeford Committee Services Officer (minutes)

1. Apologies

No apologies for absence had been received.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning & Regeneration Cabinet Committee held on Thursday, 28 March 2019 were signed by the Chair.

3. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Harold Craske declared an 'other interest' in Item 5 Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) / Bird Wise in that he is a substitute representative on Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) / Bird Wise.

Cllr Lauren Sullivan declared an 'other interest' in Item 5 Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) / Bird Wise in that she is a representative on Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) / Bird Wise.

Cllr Conrad Broadley declared an 'other interest' in Item 5 Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) / Bird Wise in that he is a member of the following river organisations:

Gravesend Sailing Club
Northfleet Harbour Restoration Trust
Broadness Cruising Club
Dartford and Crayford Creek Restoration Trust

4. Terms of Reference

The Committee considered and noted the Terms of Reference for Cabinet Committees as detailed in Annex 1.7 of the Council's Constitution.

5. Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) / Bird Wise

The Committee received a presentation on Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) / Bird Wise by Hayley Taylor - Bird Wise Project Manager

The presentation can be viewed here:

<http://democracy.gravesham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=444&MId=3241&Ver=4>

The Bird Wise Project Manager fielded questions from the Committee and highlighted the following:

- Bird Wise will be creating an educational programme over the summer, ready to take into local schools. The project recently visited a retired group in Higham to discuss the work Bird Wise does which was very well received.
- Some developers talk about 'cat scarers' but it's not clear if they are very effective in protecting birds.
- Bird Wise are focusing on new visitors to the coastal areas and have already taken into account existing users.
- Bird Wise are looking to work more closely with the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation. The EDC is on the edge of the 6KM area of impact, this means that income from the developments falling within Gravesham contribute to the strategic approach whilst there is a different approach for developments in the 6-10KM zone which covers more Dartford schemes.
- Disturbance of birds is measured by looking at the population of birds and certain activities (e.g. drone, jet ski, cycling, dog walking) and the bird's reaction to these activities.
- Bird Wise is aware of the impact of the Lower Thames Crossing and contact has been made but Bird Wise does not have a collective view on this matter as it has several different partners whose views may differ. The expectation is that each partner will express their views independently.
- The tariff is per property and was calculated by dividing the long-term cost of delivering mitigation by the total number of proposed properties within the 6KM impact zone. The tariff is index linked and so increases in line with inflation on an annual basis.

The Chair thanked Hayley Taylor - Bird Wise Project Manager for an informative and interesting presentation and welcomed the news that Bird Wise is going to increase and promote its education programme with engagement through schools.

6. Strategic Environment - Did you know? presentation

The Assistant Director (Planning) provided the Committee with a presentation entitled:- Strategic Environment - Did you know?

The presentation can be viewed here:

<http://democracy.gravesham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=444&MId=3241&Ver=4>

The Assistant Director (Planning) fielded questions from the Committee and highlighted the following:

- The Open Space Assessment can be found on the Council's website here: <https://www.gravesham.gov.uk/home/community-and-leisure/sports-and-recreation/open-space,-sport-and-recreation-assessment>
- China and the US emit the most greenhouse gases - 40% of the global total. While governments need to make big changes, individuals can play a role too:
 - buy less meat, milk, cheese and butter;
 - eat more locally sourced seasonal food - and throw less of it away;
 - drive electric cars but walk or cycle short distances;
 - take trains and buses instead of planes;
 - use video-conferencing instead of business travel;
 - use a washing line instead of a tumble dryer;
 - insulate homes;
 - demand low carbon in every product
- The Assistant Director (Planning) explained that the suggestions put forward are not mandatory; the aim of the presentation is to highlight a range of issues. The presentation is not connected to the motion that is going to Full Council.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Director (Planning) for an informative and interesting presentation.

7. Future High Streets report

The Assistant Director (Communities) updated the Committee on the council's expression of interest for Future High Streets Funding.

An expression of interest for Gravesend Town Centre was submitted by the council by the 22 March 2019 deadline. The challenges facing the Town and a vision and ambition for change are summarised in Appendix 2. The expression of interest was accompanied by a series of letters of support from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership and other partners, including KCC, Thames Gateway Kent Partnership; development partners, such as Reef Estates; and, community and local business interests.

The Government received over 300 expressions of interest from local authorities and these are currently being assessed against the published criteria. Places

moving to Phase 2 will be announced in Summer 2019.

The first Phase bid for Gravesham is for just over £200,000 (revenue funding)

If Gravesham successfully moves into Phase 2; there is the potential to access between £5million and £10million.

The Chair highlighted that the bid that Gravesham submitted was very robust (about 50 pages) and suggested that Members contact the Assistant Director (Communities) should they wish to view the full bid.

The Chair requested that a link to the parliamentary publication 'High Streets and Town Centres in 2030' be placed in the minutes, for Member's information:

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmcomloc/1010/1010.pdf>

The Committee discussed the council's expression of interest for Future High Streets Funding and made the following views:

- The future of Gravesend Town Centre is very much in our own hands and can be shaped by us. Community leadership is required
- The Council should ask residents views on the town centre and how they would like to shape its future.
- River usage needs better promotion (pontoon, moorings, resident sailing barges etc)
- Build up / promote Gravesham's heritage assets and history
- Improve tourism in the Borough
- The contribution of the Guru Nanak Darbar Gurdwara to visitor numbers to the Town should be recognised.
- Make greater use of vacant shop windows and explore creation of delivery/collection points for online orders in the town.
- Support river travel between Gravesend and London.
- Consider intensification of housing within the town centre, with scope to retract retail and support changes of use to residential – high quality development that's high density and close to the centre.
- Consider how to encourage people to the town centre and focus on improving accessibility for all.
- What is the brand for Gravesend?

The Chair highlighted a quote from the House of Commons, Housing and Communities Committee:

Councils should be actively encouraged to develop town centre masterplans and use their powers positively to renew their town centres.

A proposed action from the Housing and Communities Committee is that Government needs to consider introducing a delivery and sales tax on online retailers as a way of putting some of that funding back into Local Authorities for use in Town Centres.

Resolved that the positive transformational opportunities presented by the Future High Streets Fund, with or without a successful outcome for Future High Streets Funding, be noted.

Close of meeting

The meeting ended at 9.27 pm