

Community Services Cabinet Committee

Thursday, 7 February 2019

7.30 pm

Present:

Cllr Greta Goatley (Vice-Chair in the Chair)

Cllrs: Gurjit Kaur Bains
Harold Craske
Rob Halpin
Jordan Meade
Shane Mochrie-Cox
Brian Sangha
Peter Scollard

Rob Swain GCLL Managing Director

Simon Hookway Assistant Director (Communities)
Anita Tysoe Service Manager (Customer and Theatre Services)
Adrian Hickmott Leisure & Resilience Manager
Chris Wakeford Committee Services Officer (Scrutiny)

54. Apologies

An apology of absence was received from Cllr Sandra Garside; Cllr Harold Craske appeared as her substitute.

55. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 26 November 2018 were signed by the Chair.

56. Declarations of interest

Cllr Harold Craske declared an 'other interest' in agenda item 7. Heritage Property Assets due to the fact that he is the Chair of the Gravesham Arts Council.

57. Gravesham Community Leisure Annual Update

The Committee received an update from Rob Swain, Gravesham Community Leisure Limited (GCLL) Managing Director; please follow the link below to view the presentation:

<http://democracy.gravesham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=368&MId=2944&Ver=4>

Rob Swain, GCLL Managing Director, fielded questions from the Committee and highlighted the following:

- Discussions have been had with Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC). The GCLL Managing Director told the EDC that GCLL would be a suitable organisation to operate in Ebbsfleet Garden City and Gravesham. The combination of nutrition, exercise and mindfulness is the best way forward in GCLL's opinion especially when linked to EDC's Healthy New Town status.
- GCLL have recently employed an outreach person. GCLL want to go into care homes, community centres, outdoor areas and deliver a service and potentially look at visiting people's homes in the future.
- In the last 3 years, The GCLL Managing Director has tried hard to engage with the NHS, CCG, Public Health and GPs but has found that he gets knocked back all the time. GCLL currently work with a medical contractor providing diabetic eye screenings on behalf of the NHS.
- GCLL do things differently in comparison to their competitors with a focus on nutrition as well as exercise and mindfulness.
- The quality of the facility at Cygnets Leisure Centre is possibly better than the Cascades Centre, due to the £1.8million refurbishment after the fire. GCLL are looking at reopening a catering offering at Cygnets. GCLL are currently trialing catering, including a new healthy menu at cascades.
- GCLL are recruiting a representative for education in the borough. The GCLL Managing Director has a meeting with a Headteacher next week to progress this matter.
- A lot of money is needed to improve both Leisure Centre sites in the future. GCLL and GBC need to think differently and come up with ideas on how to move forward. One area to consider is potential funding from mitigation measures relating to the Lower Thames Crossing.
- The GCLL Managing Director does see a golf course as part of the future leisure offer.
- GCLL currently employ a motivational coach to help people maintain their fitness goals.
- 95% of GCLL fitness instructors are personal trainers but GCLL currently don't offer a home service.

The Committee thanked the GCLL Managing Director for an informative presentation

58. Corporate Performance Update – Quarter Three 2018-19 (October - December)

The Assistant Director (Communities) presented Members of the Community Services Committee with an update against the Performance Management Framework, as set out within the council's Corporate Plan 2015- 19, for Quarter Three 2018-19 (October – December 2018).

The Assistant Director (Communities) and Service Manager (Customer and Theatre Services) fielded questions from the Committee and highlighted the following:

- Community Litter picks are going from strength to strength with litter picks in Shorne, Luddesdown, Riverview Park, Coldharbour and St James Avenue. We have also recruited a further three new volunteers.

- The Council is not aware of Windrush celebrations becoming an annual fixture but it may be an aspiration that can be discussed with community groups. The Government has announced that a national Windrush Day will take place on 22 June every year. Tilbury will figure highly in that celebration.
- Gifted Young Generation celebrated its 10th birthday with a fantastic concert of music and singing at The Woodville in November with guests from all over the borough and performances from performers of previous shows who have gone on to make an impact on the cultural community both locally and further afield. The Service Manager (Customer and Theatre Services) has already begun discussions for another concert next year.
- Gravesend Borough Market is in its infancy as a new business. There is a need to understand the identity of the market, what people want and how it works for traders. Events are doing very well at the market.
- The Council responds to businesses that place furniture onto the highway. Kent County Council is the licensing authority for this and has yet to finalise a license for furniture at the entrance to the Market.
- Customer Service calls tend to follow a trend. The Council is conscious that officers have the support they need. Customer Services continue to look at ways of improving service delivery and will shortly be undertaking a satisfaction survey to understand why customers choose a particular means of contact and whether more assistance could be given to enable customers to eventually be more self-sufficient, enabling them to have the flexibility to access council services via the website 24/7.

The Committee noted the Corporate Performance Update – Quarter Three 2018-19 (October - December).

59. Heritage Property Assets

The Assistant Director (Communities) provided the Committee with an overview of the council's heritage related property assets and the actions that are being taken to maintain and enhance them.

The council owns and has the responsibility for managing and maintaining a number of heritage related properties which require ongoing works to their fabric. These are either listed buildings or scheduled ancient monuments and they vary from larger sites and premises to a number of statues and war memorials.

Progress is now being made to put in place a medium to longer term strategy with the aim of reducing reactive repairs and maintenance, the strategy encompasses the following:

- A cyclical programme of condition surveys which can inform the council's medium and longer-term capital programme.
- Establishment of a programme of works to be funded from within the council's medium to long-term financial plan. This will create certainty for taking works forward to the next level of detail, preparation of tender documentation and scheduling of works. This has been included in the 2019/20 draft budget and approval will take place at Full Council on 26 February.
- Approaches to various external funding agencies to discuss potential bids to help fund the capital programme.

- Reviews of the use, management and interpretation of heritage assets, if appropriate, and in conjunction with the requirements of external funding bids.

Funding opportunities will be explored via The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and other funding programmes in respect of culture or coastal communities.

Cllr Meade put forward the idea that the granite obelisk in Windmill Hill Gardens should be included on the Heritage Property Assets list.

Cllr Halpin reminded the Committee of the commitment that Members made at Full Council on 28 June 2016 to the Clock Tower and Harmer Street area and how it was vital for improvements to continue and be maintained in the long-term within this area as it is one of the gateways to the town.

Cllr Mochrie-Cox suggested that the Council should have a wider Heritage Strategy that covers a broader area in the Borough and is published on the Council's website.

The Committee supported the suggestion that Cabinet consider a wider Heritage Strategy.

60. Cultural Development Fund

The Assistant Director (Communities) updated the Committee on the successful bid for Cultural Development Funding to deliver the ambition of the Thames Estuary Production Corridor.

£4.3 million funding has been awarded from the Cultural Development Fund towards the delivery of the Thames Estuary Production Corridor with total project value of £6.7m.

The University of Kent will take a lead on this Fund and will receive £4.3m to work with partners in Essex and Kent to develop the Thames Estuary Production Corridor as Europe's largest creative corridor – *"a world leader for the creative and cultural industries"*.

The Cultural Development Fund will help deliver specific projects, as follows:

- Estuary 2020: expansion of this month-long international arts festival to include new commissions in locations and communities across the Thames Estuary
- Corridor Commissions: focused on digital innovation, bringing together internationally renowned and creative technologists to 'waymark' visitors along the Thames
- Re:Generation 2030: Creative Apprenticeship scheme, creating job opportunities for 60 young people from the Estuary's disadvantaged areas to work
- Estuary Works: New creative workspaces for creative and digital businesses in creative clusters like Margate, Southend and Chatham Dockyard.
- Estuary Producers: Producer 'residencies' in locations across the Estuary, creating new cultural experiences in high streets and parks, on watersides and other venues
- Creative Labs: bringing together creatives, technologists and academics to explore how culture can address key issues such as mental health, ageing and town planning

Opportunities will potentially exist for Gravesham to benefit from this funding in relation to the following:

- Estuary 2020 – Gravesham participated in Estuary 2016, which was led by Metal in association with other partners including Whitstable Biennale, and with the participation of LV21 on this side of the water and a concentration of activity and installations at the Tilbury Cruise Terminal. It is likely that Gravesham will be able to develop its role for 2020 and strengthen partnership working across the water at this point.
- Developing the council's working with creative organisations and making the case for funding to support local cultural commissions.
- Looking for help from the TEPC to develop the area's identity through culture, recognising the strength of the Gravesham's diversity and heritage.
- Aim to develop additional cultural work and production spaces.
- Support the development of creative skills, jobs and apprenticeships, especially within the creative and digital sector in Gravesham.

Arts Council England has announced a further round of funding for a programme called Creative People and Places. Its objective is to invest in communities where there are lower levels of engagement in arts and culture. Applications for this funding are to be led by local consortia, not including local authorities, and the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation has indicated its wish to lead a bid for this area focused on the Ebbsfleet Valley area and neighbouring communities.

The Assistant Director (Communities) advised the Committee that he would welcome any ideas or examples of cultural development and asked that they be sent to him outside of the meeting.

Cllr Mochrie-Cox suggested that low rent, high output areas generate grants; a lot of creative hubs have office pods and this is something that GBC should explore.

Cllr Meade highlighted the 'Boxpark' idea that has been created in Shoreditch and Croydon. Boxpark is a food and retail park made out of refitted shipping containers (pop-up mall). Cllr Meade suggested that Gravesham could have its own Boxpark at the Canal Basin.

The Committee noted the report on the Cultural Development Fund.

Close of meeting

The meeting ended at 9.10 pm