

# Community Services Cabinet Committee

Wednesday, 03 March 2020

7:30pm

## Present:

Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox (Chair)  
Cllr Tony Rana (Vice-Chair)

Cllrs: Helen Ashenden  
Ejaz Aslam  
Harold Craske  
Aaron Elliott  
Baljit Hayre  
Les Hoskins  
Christina Rolles  
Peter Scollard

Simon Hookway	Assistant Director (Communities)
Anita Tysoe	Service Manager (Customer & Theatre Services)
Adrian Hickmott	Leisure & Resilience Manager
Virginie Whittaker	Town & Tourism Manager
Kirsty Gaunt	Community Involvement Officer
Danielle Lock	Sport & Recreation Officer
Ben Clarke	Committee & Scrutiny Assistant (Minutes)

## 31. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Cllr Jordan Meade and Cllr Baljit Hayre. Cllr Les Hoskins and Cllr Sarah Gow substituted respectively.

## 32. Minutes

An apology for absence was received from Cllr Jordan Meade and Cllr Baljit Hayre. Cllr Les Hoskins and Cllr Sarah Gow substituted respectively.

## 33. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest.

## 34. Market Working Group

The Service Manager (Customer & Theatre Services) provided copies of the minutes from the Member Working Group and the draft Market Strategy which included Member's key aspirations.

The Service Manager (Customer & Theatre Services) advised that Members comments from the first group meeting were fed into the draft Strategy which was reviewed by Members at the second group meeting.

The Service Manager (Customer & Theatre Services) explained that the Strategy had been split into four strategic objective areas:

- Respecting and delivering against the historic Market Charter, developing food as the core offer, supported by traditional and themed market days
- Preserving the roots of the historical building by celebrating and promoting the Borough's wider historical offer and creating a central hub and focal point for our significant tourism offer
- Supporting the changing face of the town centre and local business by assisting appropriate new and developing businesses through low cost, low risk, start-up space
- Celebrating and supporting our borough's diverse community through delivering events and activities that appeal to a wide audience, promote community cohesion and social inclusion.

The Chair thanked the Service Manager (Customer & Theatre Services) for her hard work in creating the Market Strategy and the Members for their thorough debates held during the Working Group meetings.

The Committee approved the draft market strategy.

### **35. Community Event Grant Scheme**

The Community Involvement Officer advised that there had been discussion in recent months about extending the Community Event Programme to see what demand there was to put on additional smaller events during the year. Large events like Chinese New Year, EID, Black History Month and Diwali have been supported by the Council in previous years.

A simple application form has been created based around the corporate plan priorities which groups can use to apply for funding for certain events; the form allows up to £2000 to be requested but organisations have also been encouraged to apply for the smaller grant funding as there is limited amounts of large funding available.

The application form has already been sent over to the organisations that held large events last year and those that have already expressed an interest in holding events for 2020; three interests have been received so far and the form will be circulated more widely in the future. All applicants will be encouraged to speak to the Community Involvement Officer before filling out the form so that they can be given guidance as to what resources their type of event requires.

The Community Involvement Officer advised that the deadline process was still being created but currently there were four deadlines for submission of the application form with the first set for the end of March 2020.

The Service Manager (Customer & Theatre Services) further explained that the intent was to open the process up to the wider community to give certain groups the opportunity to hold events they may not previously have been able too as well as advising them of what funding was available to them. The form will ask for information about the event such as what outcomes does the event hope to achieve, what its educational value is and how it will benefit the community etc.

The Chair welcomed the prospect of encouraging other groups within Gravesham to hold important events and special anniversaries.

The Community Involvement Officer advised that the intention was to send round supported information which informed organisations of other places that they could access additional funding aside from the Council.

In response to several Members questions, the Service Manager (Customer & Theatre Services) and the Community Involvement Officer explained that:

- The funding will commence in the new financial year on 01 April 2020; no funds have been allocated for any 2020 events yet
- In previous years, up to three large events have been funded £2000 each
- The Council has supported other events with smaller grant sums; the overall budget for community support totals roughly £10,000-£10,500
- The form itself is very simple and easy to complete and can be filled in on paper or electronically; it is only two sides and all event organisers should be able to write down their relevant information
- With regards to environmental impact, the Community Involvement Officer will have discussions with every event organiser in order to understand what type of environmental mitigation they will require. She can then give advice on what will be necessary such as recycling bins on site, green space protection and litter pick up etc

The Chair requested that the form and associated criteria for applying for an event be circulated to Members.

The Committee gave their support to moving forward with this scheme.

### **36. Dickens 150**

Members were updated on the plans for Gravesham to commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Charles Dickens' death in 2020.

The Town & Tourism Manager advised that since September 2019, when the initial report on the Dicken's 150 festival was submitted to the Committee, there had been several updates on the progression of the programme which were listed in the report at section two.

The Town & Tourism Manager had been by contacted Geoff Ettridge from the Ramblers group and his group will be conducting three walks in Cobham and from Cobham to Rochester throughout June and August. The walks are free and will include talks about Charles Dickens relationship with Gravesham and Medway; however it should be noted that they are also raising money for a chalet for their group.

Gabriella Björk Gabbitas, from Owletts, has written a script for a self-guided interactive walk around the village of Cobham, involving actors playing some well-known Dickens' characters. Rosemary Dymond has a part in the interactive walk and will be one of the dressed up characters.

The Town & Tourism Manager advised that dates for the Dickens Theatre Company's performance had been set and bookings had already been received.

The Town & Tourism Manager explained that a few quotes had been received for the Dickens' Quote Project but the aim was to reach 150; Councillors were encouraged to contribute.

The Town & Tourism Manager advised that the Sport & Recreation Officer had received interest from Gravesend Cricket Club about putting on a Dickensian Cricket Match. Further updates on that will be available soon.

The programme was praised by the Committee but one Member stressed the importance of a Council representative attending the Westminster Abbey service for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary as well as the Rochester Cathedral Service.

The Town & Tourism Manager received confirmation on Monday that the service at Rochester Cathedral was going to be held on 14 June 2020 at 3:15pm and understands that it is going to be open to the public, so invites may not be required.

With regards to the service at Westminster Abbey, the Council were looking into it and will be contacting the Dickens Fellowship for a possible Westminster contact.

The Committee thanked the work of the officers present and noted the development of the Dickens 150 programme.

### **37. Sports Development**

Members were updated on the current sports development work that was taking place across the Borough.

The Sport & Recreation Officer highlighted the following key points from the report:

- Sport England produce the Active Lives Report that is published twice a year and offers a national, regional and local picture of the physical activity levels of the population. A more detailed version with breakdowns on various demographics and wellbeing levels is available online
- The survey uses a large sample size of 170,000 people and the survey influences local and national government policy on sport activity. Typically, Gravesham has always been towards the bottom of the activity chart for Kent, but that is no longer the case, with Ashford now the lowest
- Kent Sport has a range of web-based support platforms, including an online Activity Finder, which enables clubs to promote their activities for free and also helps individuals to search for available sporting opportunities across the borough and the wider county. Gravesham clubs were under represented on the website so an article was produced for the latest addition of Your Borough, encouraging sports clubs to sign up to the Activity Finder and to enable individuals to 'find their sport'. As of 03 March 2020, 37 clubs have registered and 20 local sessions have been added to the Activity Finder
- As its international Women's Day on 06 March 2020, the local parks have been encouraged to turn their running sessions over to women for the day. The runs at Cyclopark and Shorne Country park have been promoted via social media posts
- The World Challenge Event will officially launch on the 27 April 2020 at Cyclopark; the project engages with those aged 16+ with a learning disability and offers them the opportunity to participate in a sports activity

- Walking Netball has been doing extremely well especially among older women giving them something to take part in and look forward too as a social event. The team has expressed an interest in attending the Walking Netball Festival on the 27 April at the Kings Sports Centre in Rochester

The Committee welcomed the sports development activity that is taking place within the Borough and noted the provision across the Borough delivered by the Council and other Partners.

### **38. Gravesham Local Services**

The Committee received a report detailing the local services available to residents in Gravesham.

The Assistant Director (Communities) explained that the document covered a wide range of services available in Gravesham including health & wellbeing, welfare, housing, economic agencies, youth groups, transport services and help lines.

The Assistant Director (Communities) advised that Lauren Wallis, Committee Services Officer should be commended for pulling the draft document together as it took considerable time and effort. The document will be exceedingly useful for residents of the Borough and will help to boost the Council's image as a trusted source of information.

Due to the wide breadth of services and sheer information, the challenge will be keeping all of the relevant addresses and contact numbers up to date; the intention is for the document to be uploaded to the website and the organisations can update their information themselves. In its current form, it will be updated every six months with a time stamp.

Following a Members suggestion that it be included in the Your Borough magazine, the Chair advised that it would be too big to add to the magazine leading to increased printing costs and it wasn't eco-friendly. A link can be added to the Your Borough magazine advising the public of the services available. Additionally, the Chair asked that a small number of hard copies be printed every six months and left in the Members area that could be given to constituents by Members.

Following a few suggestions, the Chair asked that any comments and amendments needed to be made to the document be sent to Lauren Wallis to action.

The Committee thanked Lauren Wallis for her hard work in putting together the document and asked that it be circulated to all Members.

Members noted the content within the report.

### **Close of meeting**

The meeting ended at 8:11pm.