

Community & Leisure Cabinet Committee

Tuesday, 2 February 2021

7.30 pm

Present:

Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox (Chair)

Cllr Tony Rana (Vice-Chair)

Cllrs: Helen Ashenden
Ejaz Aslam
Harold Craske
Aaron Elliott
Gary Harding
Emma Morley
Christina Rolles
Peter Scollard

Simon Hookway	Assistant Director (Communities)
Anita Tysoe	Service Manager (Town Centre & Cultural Services)
Virginie Whittaker	Tourism and Town Twinning Manager
Kirsty Gaunt	Community Involvement Officer
Chris Wakeford	Committee Services Manager (Minutes)
Stewart McDonald	Technical Services Support Officer

65. Captain Sir Tom Moore

The Chair reflected on the sad news that Captain Sir Tom Moore had passed away today. The Committee paused for a moment of reflection in honour of Captain Sir Tom Moore

The Chair explained that Captain Sir Tom Moore got married in Gravesend and a tribute would be paid to him when circumstances permit.

The Chair paid tribute to the wonderful work of the NHS and the fantastic partnership work with the Council to create the vaccination centre in The Woodville.

66. Apologies

No apologies for absence were received.

67. Minutes

The following matters were raised:

Minute 56. Apologies: Cllr Jordan Meade appeared as a substitute for Cllr Gary Harding (not Cllr Aaron Elliott, as stated)

Minute 58. Declarations of Interest: Cllr Peter Scollard is not a member of the Gr@nd CIC Board; he is a Council appointee on Gravesham Community Leisure Limited (GCLL).

Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox is also a Council appointee on Gravesham Community Leisure Limited (GCLL).

Minute 60. Draft Community & Engagement Strategy: Typo at the bottom of the page; 'originations' should be 'organisations'

Following the above amendments; the minutes of the meeting on Thursday, 12 November 2020 were signed by the Chair.

68. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox declared an other interest in agenda item 4. Review of Gravesham Borough Council's Support to local voluntary and community organisations and Item 5. Community Engagement Strategy as he is a Council appointee on Gravesham Access Group, Gravesend Regatta Committee, Gravesham Community Leisure Limited (GCLL) and The Gr@nd CIC.

Cllr Peter Scollard declared an other interest in agenda item 4. Review of Gravesham Borough Council's Support to local voluntary and community organisations and Item 5. Community Engagement Strategy as he is a Council appointee on North West Kent Volunteer Centre and Gravesham Community Leisure Limited (GCLL)

69. Review of Gravesham Borough Council's Support to local voluntary and community organisations

The Service Manager (Town Centre & Cultural Services) and the Community Involvement Officer updated Members on the strategic review conducted in relation to the support being provided to voluntary and community organisations by the Council.

As a result of this review, a list was compiled of those organisations who it was felt the Council should support through a 12 month funded Service Level Agreement. Appendix 2 to the report sets out details of those organisations, the support they will provide and the funding to be allocated for the next financial year.

The Service Manager (Town Centre & Cultural Services) and the Community Involvement Officer fielded questions from the Committee and highlighted the following:

- Some of the support being provided to organisations by the Council has been renewed from previous years, so GBC understands the work they are doing; other organisations have had grant funding across the year in response to the pandemic. The support provided by the Council depends on what support they already have.
- There are a large number of organisations in the Borough. There is still grant funding that we are distributing, including the Winter Support Grant. If Councillors are aware of any organisations that required assistance they can contact The Service Manager (Town Centre & Cultural Services) or the Community Involvement Officer and they will signpost them to support or see how the Council can help.

The Committee noted the process undertaken and the organisations identified for support through formal service level agreements for the 2021/22 financial year.

70. Community Engagement Strategy

The Service Manager (Town Centre & Cultural Services) and the Community Involvement Officer presented the Committee with the updated draft of the Community Engagement Strategy for Gravesham

Following the presentation of the draft strategy to the November Cabinet Committee for Community and Leisure, amendments have been made to reflect comments and suggestions made by members.

Cllr Aslam highlighted the need for the policy to reflect the whole borough and make all residents feel part of empowerment.

The Chair explained that a lot of work is being done but it needs to be coordinated and the Council needs to work in partnership for the good of the residents. A two way dialogue is essential for community engagement.

The Committee approved the draft strategy so that it may be formally adopted and highlighted their continued support for the further development and implementation of the action plan.

71. Draft Equalities Policy, Objectives and Action Plan

The Community Involvement Officer presented the new Gravesham Borough Council Equality Policy and Objectives for 2021-24 including an action plan.

Members of the committee were asked to comment on the new policy, objectives and action plan enabling the Cabinet Member for Community & Leisure to recommend adoption at Full Council on 23 February 2021

The Committee noted the new Gravesham Borough Council Equality Policy and Objectives for 2021-24 and the action plan and recommended their adoption at Full Council on 23 February 2021

72. Modern Slavery Progress Update

The Assistant Director (Communities) provided the Committee with details of progress being made in tackling modern slavery in the Borough, the Committee having considered the Council's new Modern Slavery Strategy at its meeting in September 2020.

The Assistant Director (Communities) highlighted the following:

- The Council successfully launched its Modern Slavery Strategy in October which coincided with National Anti-Slavery Day
- There were good articles in the Gravesend Messenger and Your Borough which demonstrated the close partnership approach being taken and included contributions from Porchlight, the Police and the Council

- The Gravesham Modern Slavery Working Group has been established and is chaired by Natalie Brown (lead on safeguarding) The Terms of reference for the group are detailed in Appendix 4 to the report.
- This is a very proactive local approach. To our knowledge, we are the only district in Kent that has a dedicated strategy with multi agency input.
- More victims are being identified and being referred via the National Referral Mechanism for support, that is why the statistics may look high compared with other parts of the country.
- Training for Members will be provided on this subject matter. The Assistant Director (Communities) will liaise with Kent Police to see when this can be scheduled.

The Committee noted the Modern Slavery Progress Update

73. Tourism & Heritage Strategy

The Tourism and Town Twinning Manager and Assistant Director (Communities) reported back to the Committee on the responses to the consultation and outlined the additional associated work which has influenced the amendments proposed to the Tourism and Heritage Strategy prior to its approval by the Cabinet Member for Community & Leisure.

A draft strategy was reported to the Committee in September 2020 prior to consultation with tourism organisations, local businesses, visitors and residents.

The consultation took place from 9 December to 17 January via the Council's website, Visit Gravesend Facebook and Twitter pages, and via email databases.

The Tourism and Town Twinning Manager highlighted the following:

- Over 100 consultation responses were received, a large proportion from local residents
- A high number saw tourism as important to very important
- There was a high rating of the strategy's objectives
- A programme of festival, arts and cultural activities were popular as well as the interpretation of Gravesham's story and the strengthening of its tourism offer.
- The respondents' comments were constructive and will be helpful going forward
- The volume of tourism is on the increase. 2019 was a good year for Gravesham with visitors to the area and the positive economic impact of the visits to the borough.
- Experiential Tourism: all about supporting local businesses - free training for business. 8 businesses have signed up to phase 1 and 2 so far with 2 more being considered for phase 3.
- Covid-19: important to mention in the strategy; the impact on leisure and hospitality is evident but we don't know the full impact yet
- London Resort - still need to fully understand how this will affect us and how the borough can fully capitalise from visits to the park

Following questions from the Committee; the Tourism and Town Twinning Manager highlighted the following:

- New historical sites / artefacts are discovered all the time in Gravesham and will be added to the database. The Council is aware that many exist along the riverfront
- The strategy will be used to encourage people visiting the London Resort to visit Gravesend too.

The committee noted and supported the amendments proposed to the draft Tourism and Heritage Strategy.

74. Q3 Corporate Performance Report - Community & Leisure Portfolio – 2020/2021

The Assistant Director (Communities) presented Members of the Community & Leisure Committee with an update against the Performance Management Framework, as introduced within the council's Corporate Plan, for Quarter Three 2020-21 (October to December 2020).

The Assistant Director (Communities) guided Members through the report and gave a brief update under each Policy Commitment.

Following questions from the Committee, the Assistant Director (Communities) and Service Manager (Town Centre & Cultural Services) highlighted the following:

- P I 13 Total number of environmental enforcement actions taken: this doesn't fully reflect a shift to enforcement of larger fly-tipping incidents and the FPN's being issued along with potential court action. A way to adjust this performance measure will be looked into
- Policy Commitment 4. Enhance the borough's cultural offer: this year's pantomime was held virtually and was well received.

Members noted the information contained within the report.

Close of meeting

The meeting ended at 8.44 pm