



Extraordinary Overview Scrutiny Committee

Members of the **Overview Scrutiny Committee** of **Gravesham Borough Council** are summoned to attend an extraordinary meeting to be held virtually on **Tuesday, 27 October 2020 at 7.30 pm** when the business specified in the following agenda is proposed to be transacted. Details on how Members can attend the meeting will be sent separately.

In response to COVID-19, the Government has legislated to permit remote attendance by Elected Members at formal meetings. This is conditional on other Elected Members and the public being able to hear those participating in the meeting. This meeting will be streamed live and can be watched via Gravesham Borough Council's YouTube Channel:-

www.youtube.com/graveshamtv

S Walsh
Service Manager (Communities)

Agenda

Part A

Items likely to be considered in Public

1. Apologies
2. Minutes (Pages 3 - 6)
3. Declarations of Interest
4. To consider whether any items in Part A will be considered in private or any items in Part B in public
5. Maritime Scrutiny Review Sub-Committee – Report from the last meeting on 17 September 2020 attached for reference. (Pages 7 - 14)

The Vice-Chair, Cllr Steve Thompson along with Cllr Elizabeth Mulheran and Cllr Christina Rolles have called this Extraordinary Overview Scrutiny Committee in order to discuss the composition and political representation on the Maritime Scrutiny Review Sub-Committee.

For background information on this matter members are invited to view the last minutes of the Committee held on 17 September 2020 (attached to this agenda) and the report that went to the last meeting (also attached to the agenda)

6. Any other business which by reason of special circumstances the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.
7. Private Items

To move, if required, that pursuant to section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public be excluded from any items included in Part B of the agenda because it is likely in view of the nature of business to be transacted that if members of the public are present during those items, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of schedule 12A of the Act.

Part B

Items likely to be considered in private

None at the time of publication

Members

Cllr Jordan Meade (Chair)
Cllr Steve Thompson (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: Conrad Broadley
 Leslie Hills
 Emma Morley
 Elizabeth Mulheran
 Alan Ridgers
 Christina Rolles
 Peter Scollard

Substitutes: To be notified

Overview Scrutiny Committee**Thursday, 17 September 2020****7.30 pm****Present:**

Cllr Jordan Meade (Chair)

Cllr Steve Thompson (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: Conrad Broadley
Leslie Hills
Emma Morley
Elizabeth Mulheran
Alan Ridgers
Christina Rolles
Peter Scollard

Chris Wakeford Committee Services Officer (Scrutiny)

13. Apologies

No apologies for absence were received.

14. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview Scrutiny Board held on 9 July 2020 were signed by the Chair.

15. Declarations of interest

Cllr Conrad Broadley declared an 'other interest' in Item 5. The Re-starting of the Maritime Strategy Scrutiny Review 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

Cllr Jordan Meade declared an 'other interest' in Item 5. The Re-starting of the Maritime Strategy Scrutiny Review in that he is a member of the Maritime Volunteer Service (operating at Gravesend Sailing Club).

16. The re-starting of the Maritime Strategy Review Sub-Group

The Committee Services Officer (Scrutiny) highlighted the progress made with the Maritime Strategy Review up to March 2020, when the review paused due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Several evidence gathering sessions had been held with various groups including; the Port of London Authority, Riverside Clubs (Gravesend Sailing Club, Gravesend Rowing Club, Gravesend Regatta Society, PLA Community Outreach Manager) Young People from the Youth Democracy Scheme and a visit to the Rochester Riverside Development.

The Committee Services Officer (Scrutiny) invited Members of the Committee to consider:

- Noting the work that has been undertaken on the review up to March 2020.
- Resuming the Review of GBC's Maritime Strategy
- Setting a new target date for the completion of the review
- Which areas to explore next and the format of this exploration (bearing in mind Covid-19 restrictions)

The Committee discussed the review and the importance of GBC having a Maritime Strategy, especially with regard to riverside development.

The Chair highlighted the following to the Committee:

- The Chair has spoken to the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council and they have confirmed that the resources are available to resume the review.
- The Chair proposed resuming the review with a new completion date of the end of November 2020 and a report to be finalised and published in December 2020 (Members also indicated their intention to resume the Street Cleanliness Scrutiny Review in January 2021)
- If there is another lockdown, this matter will be reconsidered and the review will be paused if necessary.
- It is envisaged that, due to Covid-19 restrictions, most meetings / evidence gathering sessions for the review will be virtual.

Resolved that the Overview Scrutiny Committee agreed the following:

- To resume the review with a new completion date of the end of November 2020 and a report to be finalised and published in December 2020.
- Cllr Emma Morley will replace Cllr Christina Rolles on the review sub-group.
- Any further decisions on the membership of the review sub-group will be taken by the Chair in conjunction with the Vice-Chair.

17. Overview Scrutiny Committee Training

Following a request from the Chair of the Overview Scrutiny Committee; the Committee Services Officer (Scrutiny) provided Members of the Overview Scrutiny Committee with a summary of the Scrutiny training that is currently available and highlighted the following:

- There are many free training options currently available to Members including; e-learning modules, workbooks and webinars from the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS)
- South East Employers are offering Scrutiny Training (for a fee) and this can be done via Zoom or Microsoft Teams.
- The LGA and CfPS have been contacted about the possibility of remote Scrutiny training and the Council is awaiting further detail about this option.
- There will be a broader report on Member Training that will be shared with Members at a later date. The report will include a Member Training plan for 2021-22

The Committee commended the Committee Services Officer (Scrutiny) and the Committee Services Team for their sterling work during the pandemic.

Resolved that:

- The Committee agreed that Members should partake in the free Scrutiny training options that are currently available and consider bespoke scrutiny training options at a later date.
- The Committee Services Officer (Scrutiny) will collate the existing free Scrutiny training options and circulate to Members of the Overview Scrutiny Committee.

Close of meeting

The meeting ended at 8.06 pm

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Classification: Public

Key Decision: No

Gravesham Borough Council

Report to: Overview Scrutiny Committee
Date: 17 September 2020
Reporting officer: Chris Wakeford, Committee Services Officer (Scrutiny)
Subject: Restarting the Review of GBC's Maritime Strategy.

Purpose and summary of report:

Members of the Committee are invited to consider resuming the review of GBC's Maritime Strategy.

Recommendations:

1. That the Committee note the work that has been undertaken so far and agree to reinstate the work of the review sub-group.
2. That the Committee consider and agree a new target date for the completion of the review.

Background

- 1.1 As per Annex 2.5 of the council's Constitution, the Overview Scrutiny Committee is required to "...establish and maintain a continuing programme of Topic Reviews".
- 1.2 In July 2019 the Committee agreed to conduct a review of GBC's Maritime Strategy
- 1.3 In September 2019 The Terms of Reference were agreed by the Committee (as detailed in Appendix 2) and the composition of the review sub-group was confirmed as follows:
Councillor Jordan Meade, Chair of the sub-group
Councillor Conrad Broadley
Councillor Alan Ridgers
Councillor Christina Rolles
Councillor Peter Scollard
- 1.4 The Committee agreed to aim to complete the review by March 2020, this was subsequently amended by the Committee at their meeting in January 2020 to a completion date of April 2020. The pandemic resulted in the cessation of the review from March 2020 onwards.

2. Progress to March 2020

2.1 20 December 2019 – Meeting with the Port of London Authority (PLA)

- The review group met with Nadine Collins-Smith - Head of Thames Vision Delivery, Port of London Authority.
- The session raised some interesting points including:
 - Development of GBC's relationship / interaction with the PLA
 - Air quality
 - The effect of Tilbury 2 on the river.
 - Nadine Collins-Smith offered an open dialogue with the group so questions can be submitted and she can be invited back in if needed.

2.2 7 February 2020 - Visit to the Rochester Riverside Development

- Cllr Broadley and Cllr Meade visited the Rochester Riverside Development Scheme and met with Peter Sofoluke, the principal Architect behind the scheme.
- The following areas were discussed / noted:
 - Member engagement, use of River assets and how members from across the Council were involved in the design of the scheme.
 - Sustainability and how the buildings were being designed not only to compliment the environment but with the environment in mind.
 - It was noted that as part of the initial design consultation, local councillors were given a Polaroid camera and told to go around Rochester taking snaps of architectural features of the town that they liked and felt would make the scheme more acceptable to local people. This worked well with the final design reflecting its surroundings well.
 - It was further noted that this scheme was looking to create "communities within communities" in that local shop units had been leased prior to the occupation of residential properties being occupied.
 - It was felt that while the scheme was strong in terms of design, sustainability and community engagement; opportunities for recreational access to the River Medway had not been realised.

2.3 14 February 2020 - Riverside Clubs Meeting

- Cllr Meade met with the following clubs: Gravesend Sailing Club, Gravesend Rowing Club, Gravesend Regatta Society, PLA Community Outreach Manager.
- The following areas were discussed / noted:
 - There was a general consensus that there needs to be "more joined up thinking" when it comes to the recreational use of the River.
 - It was sometimes confusing which sports/recreational users of the River should contact for compliance/event support.
 - There was a general consensus that club resources were limited and outdated.
 - Clubs/Groups hoped that with the Lower Thames Crossing there might be an opportunity for funding from mitigation to improve recreational access to the Thames, but they did not know who to contact with ideas or how to feed back to the consultation.

- All agreed that it was challenging to allow young people to participate in water-based activity due to health and safety and lack of adult volunteers.
- All agreed that we could make so much more of the River and the heritage of the Thames.
- Gravesham has a lack of; changing facilities, exercise facilities and the club-based night-time economy offering that other riparian towns have.

2.4 21 February 2020 - Meeting with Young People from the Youth Democracy Scheme to discuss the Maritime Strategy Review.

- Cllr. Meade met with a group of eight members of the Youth Council for a general and informal discussion on the use of the River from a young person's perspective.
- The following areas were discussed / noted:
 - The young people had a generally good awareness of the River and the Borough's riparian offering. There was a consensus that many young people in the town would not use places such as the Fort Gardens, The Prom or St Andrews' Gardens as they worried about safety and "the type of people" that congregated in these spaces. This was particularly prominent in the winter months where it was expressed that a lack of lighting around the river front makes it feel "unsafe" and not the type of place that a young person would want to go.
 - The group were unaware of assets in Northfleet such as Northfleet Harbour, the Northfleet Beach and the industrial heritage in Northfleet connected to the River.
 - The group was aware that recreational activities took place on the Thames, but they were generally unaware of how they could participate in the activity of the clubs. They felt that the clubs were not doing enough to make themselves attractive to young people.
 - The group felt that the Council should do more to promote these recreational opportunities within schools as an alternative to the traditional fun runs and sports like tennis.
 - Many in the group felt that "we were missing a trick" in not providing more recreational activities connected to the enjoyment of the River.
 - There was a consensus in the group that not enough was done locally to educate young people about the importance of the River Thames and there was equally little done to promote safety. It was suggested that the Council and Schools should develop a local curriculum around this.
 - The group did not have a clear understanding of "Thames Gateway", "The Estuary" and they additionally did not know about the "Port of London Authority".
 - On being presented with a map of the River the group found it challenging to demonstrate direction and to identify local places/landmarks.
 - The Group did not know about the Saxon Shoreway and on being told about it stated that the Council should do more to promote this as a key feature of our borough.
 - The group did not know that the PLA was based in Gravesend and further still they had no idea about the career opportunities available. It

was discussed that the Council should work with the PLA to better present these opportunities and further still it would be useful to identify future skills gaps in careers on the river, so that Gravesham students could adapt their studies to make the most of these opportunities.

- It was agreed that the historical and cultural importance of the River Thames at Gravesend is often forgotten or ignored.
- There was consensus that a Ferry to London would be seen as a uniquely 'cool' alternative to travelling on the train and that such a facility would be used by young people especially when going to concerts in Greenwich and other hard to reach by train locations.
- The young people suggested that the promenade area was outdated and lacked anything interesting.
- The young people further suggested that the club facilities along the promenade looked tired and that the area could do with an uplift.
- There was concern over the Lower Thames Crossing and it was unanimously agreed that Highways England had failed to engage with young people throughout the process thus far.

3. Next Steps

3.1 Members of the Committee are invited to consider:

- Resuming the Review of GBC's Maritime Strategy.
- Setting a new target date for the completion of the review
- Which areas to explore next and the format of this exploration (bearing in mind Covid-19 restrictions)

4. BACKGROUND PAPERS

4.1 Anyone wishing to inspect background papers should, in the first place, be directed to Committee Services who will make the necessary arrangements.

IMPLICATIONS	APPENDIX 1
Legal	None identified at this stage.
Finance and Value for Money	It is envisaged that the topic recommendations will be value for money for the Borough.
Risk Assessment	None identified at this stage
Equality Impact Assessment	Screening for Equality Impacts
	Question
	<p>a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community? If yes, please explain answer. No</p>
	<p>b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality? If yes, please explain answer. N/A</p>
	<i>In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above</i>
Corporate Plan	<p>Strategic Objective 1 - Safer Gravesham</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliver on our 'green agenda' by increasing the levels of recycling and reducing the amount of residual household waste Generate service efficiencies to maintain weekly, effective rubbish collections. - Deliver a quality built and green environment; keeping streets clean and maintaining a high standard of local horticulture - Use all available powers to pursue anyone damaging the health of the local environment (e.g. dog fouling, littering, fly-tipping etc). <p>Strategic Objective 2 - Stronger Gravesham</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote Gravesham's cultural and heritage offer, through initiatives such as helping to raise funds to bring back a museum in Gravesend - Deliver an improved leisure offer; activities and facilities that increase sporting participation rates and address local health inequalities.
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage
Digital and website	None identified at this stage

implications	
Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults	None identified at this stage



Appendix 2

Overview Scrutiny Committee – Topic Review Terms of Reference

– Review of Gravesham Borough Council’s Maritime Strategy

– September 2019

1. Membership of the review sub-group

1.1 The political representation on the sub-group will be as follows:

- | | | |
|-------|---|-----|
| 1.1.1 | Councillor Jordan Meade, Chair of the sub-group | (C) |
| 1.1.2 | Councillor Conrad Broadley | (C) |
| 1.1.3 | Councillor Alan Ridgers | (C) |
| 1.1.4 | Councillor Christina Rolles | (L) |
| 1.1.5 | Councillor Peter Scollard | (L) |

1.2 Co-opted Representatives (at the discretion of the Chairman).

1.3 Whilst the Portfolio Holders and any other Member of the Executive cannot legally be a member of the sub-committee, they may be invited to the meetings when appropriate by the Chairman.

1.4 The Chairman may, from time to time, invite individuals, companies and organisations to contribute towards the work of the Committee.

1.5 The sub-group will be supported in their activities by the Committee Services Team.

1.6 Additional support will be provided, specific to the review, as required from officers across the council.

2 Work plan of the sub-group

2.1 The sub-group will look at the following areas

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 2.1.1 | To undertake a review of how the Council promotes Gravesham as a riparian borough. |
| 2.1.2 | To further explore how the borough can capitalise on the River Thames as a driver for economic development. |
| 2.1.3 | To evaluate the effectiveness and review the delivery of the Council’s existing Thames-based partnerships and scope out the potential for the creation of additional partnerships. |
| 2.1.4 | In the context of planning, explore how access to the River Thames can be improved for both recreational and commercial purposes. |



- 2.1.5** To appraise existing infrastructure and how new developments can support riverside regeneration.
- 2.1.6** To find greater opportunities for young people and the wider community to utilise Gravesham's river assets.
- 2.1.7** To enable the Portfolio Holder and Senior Officers to brief and consult on any proposed policy and procedural changes that might affect the Council's Tourism and Planning Strategies in relation to The River Thames.

2.2 As per the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (Annex 2.5 of the Constitution), the Committee will be informed of the response to any recommendations to cabinet, at the next available meeting following the Cabinet discussion.

3 Timeframe for activities

- 3.1** An initial timeframe for completion of the topic review of six months has been agreed (March 2020) although Members have agreed that ensuring the review is thorough and robust is critical and therefore, should the review need to go past this deadline, this will be acceptable.
- 3.2** Six months after the topic review is considered, an agenda item will be listed for the next available Overview Scrutiny Committee to receive a report on actions completed, their outcomes and the status of actions in progress.