

## Community & Leisure Cabinet Committee

Tuesday, 14 September 2021

7.30 pm

### Present:

Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox (Chair)

Councillors: Helen Ashenden  
Ejaz Aslam  
Gurjit Kaur Bains  
John Caller  
Harold Craske  
Aaron Elliott  
Sarah Gow  
Emma Morley  
Peter Scollard

Simon Hookway  
Anita Tysoe

Assistant Director (Communities)  
Service Manager (Town Centre & Cultural Services)  
Cultural Manager  
Community Involvement Officer  
Committee Services Officer (Minutes)

Mandy Hare  
Kirsty Gaunt  
Julie Francis-Beard

### 7. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Cllr Christina Rolles and Cllr Tony Rana. Cllr Sarah Gow and Cllr John Caller attended as their respective substitutes.

### 8. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 3 June 2021 were signed by the Chair.

### 9. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox declared an other interest in agenda Item 9. Corporate Performance Report: Q1 2021-22 as he is a Council appointee on Gravesham Community Leisure Limited (GCLL) and The Gr@nd CIC.

Cllr Peter Scollard declared an other interest in agenda Item 9. Corporate Performance Report: Q1 2021-22 as he is a Council appointee on Gravesham Community Leisure Limited (GCLL). Cllr Peter Scollard declared an other interest in agenda Item 8. Corporate Register of Partnership – July 2021 and as he is a Council appointee on North West Kent Volunteer Centre

Cllr John Caller declared an interest as he is a Council appointee on Meopham Community Sport and Leisure Association Management Committee.

## 10. Arts & Culture Strategy Update

The Cultural Manager provided Members of the Committee with a report of the cultural activity that has taken place since the ratification of A Creative Gravesham - An Arts and Culture Strategy in September 2020.

A Creative Gravesham – An Arts and Culture Strategy was ratified in September 2020 including the delivery plan for the first year of the strategy. The strategy identified 5 priorities

- Delivering a cultural and creative community
- Supporting and developing artists and creatives
- Establishing a vibrant and aspirational arts and cultural events programme
- Enhancing and promoting our assets and heritage
- Developing our children and young people creatively

The Cultural Manager highlighted the following:

- **Delivering a cultural and creative community** - the cultural update and action plan highlight the activity GBC support and the funding that has been applied for. Several new pieces of work have been developed in the borough supported by GBC through the Make It Grants and larger co-commissions for England's Creative Coast and Estuary 21. The Make It Grants allocated 5 grants creating new work at the end of lockdown and 5 artist's grants as part of the Bloomin' Lovely Festival in summer 2021. A full programme is being developed for St George's Arts Centre and St Andrew's Arts Centre with drop in areas for artists.
- **Supporting and Developing Artists and Creatives** – following ongoing meetings with Gravesham Arts salon networking group a successful bid enabled a hybrid Estuary Fringe Festival to take place, which included some online platforms and live exhibits.
- **Enhancing and promoting our assets and heritage** - the Milton Chantry 700 has a new exhibition in the Barrack Room showcasing one of the Bloomin' Lovely grant installations. Strategic plans are being developed with partners to align with GBC priorities and an artist network heritage. Kickstart scheme – a digital platform is being developed for the Re:Generation 2031. Events are being planned around the Jubilee year and requesting collections from young artists.

Following questions from the Committee; the Cultural Manager highlighted the following:

- The Chair congratulated and thanked the team for all their hard work on the delivery of this plan, especially during COVID, and it demonstrates the amount of work that has been achieved.
- The Cultural Manager explained that a soft launch for the St George's Arts Centre is proposed for November and will be fully opened by December.
- The Cultural Manager explained that the delivery of arts has been focussed during the pandemic, the majority of fringe festival events were online, Woodville Theatre have been streaming performances into people's own homes. Telephone Theatre is a process where you buy a ticket and get a phone call from one person then another person and the whole play is performed that way.

Members noted the information contained in the report that the paper is recognised as a reflection of the activity that has taken place and the plans and actions are approved for 22/23

## **11. Community Engagement Strategy Action Plan**

The Community Involvement Officer updated Members of the Committee progress against the Community Engagement Strategy.

In February 2021, the Community Engagement Strategy was adopted. The strategy set out 4 main objectives:

- Being a Listening Council
- Empowering Residents and Communities
- Supporting Community Organisations
- Building Cohesive Communities

The Community Involvement Officer highlighted the following:

- Work has taken place with the Communications Team regarding the publication of a programme of public consultation.
- A protocol is being developed for how the council uses and actions the results of community feedback.
- Improved promotion of how to contact the council and your local councillors is being considered.
- Engagement with the Parish Councils is an integral part of the council's engagement strategy.
- Implementation and development of the Street Champions, of which there are 186 volunteers. This has proved very popular over the lockdown.
- A number of litter pick events have taken place involving local Councillors.
- The Council is developing processes for the public to engage with the council building during the pandemic but also recognising the digital divide.
- The Council is investigating other ways of managing face to face interactions.
- Local services have pulled together to create good partnership working including VCS networking events.
- Development is underway of an online community organisation and representative database.

Following questions from the Committee; the following areas were raised:

- It was agreed that the Community Engagement Strategy Action Plan has enabled people to focus their work on built on it.
- The chair and committee acknowledged the team is second to none, very professional and events always run smoothly. The Service Manager (Town Centre and Cultural Services) acknowledged that local residents and partners do recognise the work that Gravesham has done during the pandemic and how delivery has changed following the pandemic.
- The chair mentioned that it is a collaborative effort supported by community engagement and working with a number of organisations.

- The chair informed the committee that feedback is so important, it is a two-way conversation and we have to act on the responses. Regarding the Digital divide; we have to recognise that not everything can be done online.
- The chair commended the Street Champions, they are active volunteers and are the envy of other areas. The LGBT pride event was the first in Gravesham and was very well received.
- It was discussed about working with the Afghan and Kurdish community and the Community Involvement Officer will work with them and the local councillor. It was requested to add refugee immigration into the action plan and the Chair has confirmed that this will be included.
- A thank you for the 186 Street Champions had been planned for March 2020 but due to COVID that could not take place. Gravesham would still like to host an event to say thank you.

The Community and Leisure Cabinet Committee noted the report and updated action plan.

## **12. Equalities Policies and Action Plan Update**

The Community Involvement Officer updated Members of the Committee with the progress of the Equalities Policy, Objectives and Action Plan.

In February 2021, the council's Equalities Policy, Objectives and Action Plan was adopted. The policy sets out two main objectives and four themes. The objectives are:

- Understanding our communities and workforce and how people could be disadvantaged or discriminated against because of a protected characteristic.
- Building a cohesive and inclusive borough as a service provider, employer and community leader.

The actions are themed as follows:

- Understanding and working with our communities
- Leadership and organisational commitment
- Responsive services and customer care
- Diverse and engaged council

Following questions from the Committee; the Community Involvement Officer and the Service Manager (Town Centre and Cultural Services) highlighted the following:

- The Service Manager (Town Centre and Cultural Services) informed the committee that if members of the public are experiencing issues with contacting the council, officers can meet in person in Reception by booking an appointment with Jackie Denton Customer Services Manager to access the services they require.
- The Council is looking at its workforce training, ongoing HR services including developing a wellbeing policy and this will be ongoing. The Community Involvement Officer agreed to circulate a full list of workforce equalities monitoring categories to the Committee.

The Community & Leisure Cabinet Committee noted the report.

### **13. Extract from the Register of Partnerships and Shared Service**

The Assistant Director (Communities) updated Members of the Committee on the council's involvement in partnerships that are within the remit of the committee.

There are currently 9 partnerships that work directly with the committee:

- Council for Voluntary Service North West Kent
- CCTV Services Partnership
- GO TRADE
- Gravesham Community Safety Partnership (CSP)
- Gravesham Gateway
- G-Safe Town Centre Crime Reduction (Radionet) Scheme
- North West Kent Volunteer Service
- Oasis Domestic Abuse Service
- Thames Defence Heritage

Following questions from the Committee; the Assistant Director (Communities) highlighted the following:

- The Assistant Director (Communities) will feedback the request that a review of the level of engagement by Members in partnerships take place.
- The addition of Housing's CCTV to the partnership arrangements alongside public CCTV is a positive move.
- Oasis is now the new name for Choices. The committee discussed the climate change section and that there was no obvious relationship between the services being delivered and climate change. The Service Manager (Town Centre and Cultural Services) explained that the section relates to encouraging partnerships to be mindful of the climate change agenda within their own work. It was agreed this section of the register would be reviewed to ensure it was reflective and appropriate of the work of the partnership.

The Community & Leisure Cabinet Committee noted the report.

### **14. Corporate Performance Report: Q1 2021-22**

The Committee were provided with an update against the Performance Management Framework, as introduced within the Council's Corporate Plan, for Quarter One 2021-22 (April to June 2021).

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

Following questions from the Committee; the Assistant Director (Communities) highlighted the following:

- With regards P1 2 – we are beginning to see a different pattern of crime and ASB offences coming out of lockdown.
- In regards to P1 13 environmental standards – the action figures have increased which is a mixture of protection notices and warnings. An increase of fly tipping but

prosecutions have been made this is due to the excellent work of the Environmental Enforcement team but can be a lengthy process through to prosecution. It was requested that Gravesham's social media could reiterate how easy the process is of reporting fly tipping as residents do not always know how to report it. The website empowers people to get a response but many of the comments about how we tackle fly tipping are positive.

- The Chair explained about the Waste Carrier Licenses and putting a sample on the website so residents could see what an official one looks like.
- With regards P1 37 these figures do not reflect full opening of the leisure centres on 24 July. The Assistant Director (Communities) explained that membership uptake is returning but there is some hesitancy and Gravesham is yet to see if that will increase with more residents using the pay as you use scheme. A further update will be given in the next quarter.
- In regards to PI 40 healthy living – the Grand fully opened this week.
- PI 41 resilient community – more smaller events have taken place including litter picks, residents are taking more pride in their street which is very encouraging.
- PI 42 – The Woodville has been a vaccine centre and over 100,000 vaccines have been administered. 107 events have taken place this quarter including more outside events. Ticket prices were discussed especially regarding the booking fee, this is very standard across the board and cover the booking office costs and marketing. It was agreed this Performance Indicator would be reviewed to ensure it was reflective of the wide cultural offer.

Members noted the information contained within the report.

### **Close of meeting**

The meeting ended at 8.55 pm