

CLEANER & GREENER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2022 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. McArthur (Chairman)

Cllr. Roy (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs. Andrews, Collins, G. Darrington, Griffiths, Raikes and Roy

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Bayley and Harrison

Cllr. P. Darrington and Eyre were also present.

13. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2022 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

14. Declarations of Interest

There were none

15. Actions from Previous Meeting

There were none.

16. Referral from Cabinet or the Audit committee

There were none

17. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Chairman and Portfolio Holder gave an update to the Committee.

The Environmental Protection Team had been busy clearing a rat infestation and Officers were continuing routine safety inspections. An increasing number of stray dogs had been collected and 11 had been rehomed since the 4 October 2022.

The Environmental Health Team had been working with NetZero colleagues to apply for two DEFRA grants which sought improvements to air quality. The Team were also collecting and collating customer feedback on their service. All customers would be able to make comments online.

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The Environmental Enforcement team had recruited a new staff member and a request to recruit had been submitted for a Commercial Operations Support Officer.

Edenbridge High Street had been deep cleansed and work was due to begin the following week on Sevenoaks High-Street and there were over 30 open fly-tipping investigations progressing.

In the CCTV Team, Staffing levels had dropped to 50% and it would take a few months to recruit and train colleagues back to normal levels. The Team had been working closely with Surrey and Kent Police. The previous month, the Team had assisted Police with 9 arrests and were assisting with an organised crime case. Police Teams had passed on their thanks to the Council and CCTV Team for all their help.

A site visit had taken place at Mill Pond, the water was still contaminated and further works were required to improve the site.

18. Net Zero 2030 Update

The Chairman introduced the report and informed the Committee that this was the Net Zero Project Co-Ordinator's last meeting as she was moving to a new job. The Chairman extended sincere thanks for all her hard work and immense contributions to the Net Zero agenda and wished her luck for the future.

The Net Zero Project Co-Ordinator presented the report which provided the Committee with an update on the progress of the Net Zero Agenda in Spring/Summer 2022. The report provided an update on sustainable transport, electric vehicle charging points (EVCPs), energy efficiency, and the Council's emission's which had been reduced over the past year.

Members took the opportunity to ask questions of clarification focused on the Council's emissions and project funding. Members were informed that the Scope 3 emissions produced by the Argyle Road and Dunbrik buildings represented 'grey mileage'. This included emissions that were produced by Officers' personal vehicles that had made journeys for work purposes such as Environmental Health visits and also included Member mileage. It was noted that emissions had decreased over recent years due to the pandemic and the shift to working from home and furthermore, all Members and employees reducing mileage where possible would contribute towards the reduction in carbon emissions.

The Net Zero Project Co-Ordinator advised Members that the recently created Energy Efficiency Project Officer had been appointed using funding from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's (BEIS) Home Upgrade Grant and would be helping to deliver various projects aimed at encouraging greater energy efficiency in the District. She would also be working on the Local Government Association Behavioural Insights Programme 2022 project in liaison with other Partner Councils and KCC to encourage behaviour change for lower to middle income households to reduce domestic energy consumption. Members were advised to contact the Officer, who would be happy to help should they have any questions.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

19. Air Quality - Annual Status Report & Update

The Chairman introduced the report and the Environmental Health Manager presented the report which updated the Committee on the status of air quality in the District.

The overall outlook suggested that air quality was improving year-on-year and in 2021 all areas met national objective levels for measured pollutants. The Council's Air Quality Action Plan (2022-27) was approved by Council on 26 April 2022 which provided the framework of measures that were intended to be implemented to improve air quality. Significant progress had been made towards a number of measures and the Environmental Health Manager would report back to the Committee on further progress.

A specialist consultant had been hired to help reduce particulates and the Environmental Health Manager confirmed that he was expecting DEFRA to bring down the duty for small particulates. The threshold was, at the time, lower than he was expecting the Department for Food, Environment and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to set.

The Council had also commissioned a specialist consultancy to develop an evidence base, which demonstrated where the local need existed for Electric Vehicle infrastructure. This work was being funded by Air Quality s106 money.

A Member asked questions about vehicle idling. It was suggested that signs could be erected to remind the public to switch off their engines while stationary, especially in congested areas. The Environmental Health Manager advised that as Roadworks were dealt with primarily by KCC, SDC Officers would have limited influence over road signs but he confirmed that the Air Quality Promotions Officer was developing an engagement campaign. This would be delivered in schools in September/ October 2022 which would encourage awareness of the environmental concerns over vehicle idling.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

20. Fleet Replacement Programme 2023- 2028

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The Chairman introduced the report and the Head of Direct Services presented the report which outlined the recommendations for the fleet requirements for statutory waste collection and associated services over the following 5 years.

A new approach was sought in the report that fell within the Council's 10 year balanced budget. To ensure that SDC could replace its oldest and most vulnerable vehicles quickly, while also taking into account delivery lead times, for 2023-2024 the Council would be leasing five 26tonne Refuse Collection Vehicles. These would be in service from June 2023.

The lease would run for three years and would cost £324,000 per year for all five vehicles and would be paid for from the current Vehicle Reserve allocation for years 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2026-27. In 2027-2028 the five leased vehicles would be purchased at a cost of £625,000. In 2028-2029 further vehicles would be identified for replacement and leased in the same way. Over these 5-years the balance of the Vehicle Reserve would be used to purchase smaller fleet vehicles, which would be electric whenever possible.

Members considered the report.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that the 5 Year Fleet Replacement Programme 2023-28 as detailed in the report be considered and approved.

21. Briefing Report - Swanley Sunday Market Pilot Update

The Chairman introduced the report and the Head of Direct Services presented the report which provided an update on the Swanley Sunday Market 6 month Pilot and recommended that the pilot be extended by another 6 months.

Bray Associates commenced the proposed 6-month pilot on Sunday 3 April 2022 missing any Sunday dates agreed with Swanley Town Council. They had been responsible for the total management of the Sunday market, including publicity, marketing, operations and litter management. The Business Development Team and Direct Services had been monitoring the Sunday market pilot with planned meetings with the contractor, local businesses and the site owners, along with un-announced visits on a Sunday.

A public survey had been undertaken to engage with local people about the Sunday market pilot and to help evaluate the additional Sunday market and its operation under the pilot. The survey ran from 16 August to 16 September 2022.

The survey received 699 responses from members of the public with over 79% stating that they had visited the Sunday market. 85% of respondents were from a Swanley postal code. The results were generally split 50/50 on whether the market was a good idea, good value, good selection of goods to the opposite not needed or not good value and that it was just a copy of the Wednesday market.

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It was recommended that a full procurement tender exercise was undertaken for the Swanley street markets to operate on Wednesday and Sundays as the Wednesday market contract would end on the 31 March 2023.

The Head of Direct Services confirmed that he had also kept in constant consultation with the Town Council and the survey had received a high response rate. As the results of the survey had been divided, it was recommended that the pilot be extended for another 6 months to allow time for the Market to progress.

Members discussed the report. Some Members had attended the Market and had received lots of positive feedback from attendees as well as support for the Market from local shops and services. Some Members raised concerns over the lack of diversity of the stalls and the rubbish that the Market produced.

The Head of Direct Services confirmed that he had attended a meeting of the Town Council in which the concerns over rubbish had been expressed and had increased waste management services for the Market as a result. He had also encouraged Bray Associates to increase litter pickers on the days of the Market as well as visiting local shops to remind them of their duties to collect any rubbish from their premises. Cabinet had also approved a £25,000 Grant for the Town Council which could be used to provide extra relief for the rubbish.

Members thanked the Head of Direct Services for staying in close contact with the Town Council and Members thanked the Team for all their work.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that the additional Swanley Sunday Market extension request be considered and approved.

22. Parking Terminal Upgrade Option Report

The Head of Direct Services presented the report which updated the Committee on the essential upgrade to the District's parking payment machines to counter the phasing out of the 3g network and to permit contactless payments. The report provided two options for the Committee's consideration:

Option 1 - 4G Upgrade: Install all machines with 4G modem & antenna kits. A software update would be required for every tariff in the district, estimated at 14, with copies to other terminals on the same tariff at significantly reduced price. Engineer and labour costs would be fixed, and indicate an estimated 47 hours of work involved.

Option 2 - Contactless Payment + 4G Upgrade Combination - Install A1000 contactless pads, extended keyboards and all supporting parts to all terminals. Install all machines with 4G modem & antenna kits. A software update would be required for every tariff in the district, estimated at 14, with copies to other terminals on the same tariff at significantly reduced price. Engineer and labour costs would be fixed, and indicate an estimated 186 hours of work involved.

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Due to the requirement to upgrade the parking payment machines away from 3G and to offer customers contactless payment choices the report recommended option 2 be endorsed by the Committee.

The Head of Direct Services had received feedback from the public that there was a strong desire to pay by card at Council owned car parks.

Members discussed the report and asked questions of clarification. Members were advised that the new technology would include Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) software to provide a more convenient parking experience for customers. This would also improve security in all car parks and would encourage customers to stay for longer. Members supported the improved convenience and ease of use of the upgrades.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that option 2 below be endorsed and approved;

Option 2 - Contactless Payment + 4G Upgrade Combination - Install A1000 contactless pads, extended keyboards and all supporting parts to all terminals. Install all machines with 4G modem & antenna kits. A software update would be required for every tariff in the district, estimated at 14, with copies to other terminals on the same tariff at significantly reduced price. Engineer and labour costs be fixed, and indicate an estimated 186 hours of work involved.

23. Work Plan

The Work Plan was noted.

24. West Kent CCTV Control Room Hub

The Chairman introduced the report which updated the Committee on a technical report on the Council's CCTV system and options to create a multi-council West Kent Hub.

Members were advised of the progress made since 2016 with the feasibility of merging the Sevenoaks District Council (SDC), Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC), and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (TMBC) CCTV Control Rooms, with the hub based at SDC. Further reports had been considered and although the Council had approved for a central control hub, partnering authorities had decided not to proceed with the project. As a result, Officers investigated the options available.

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The Head of Direct Services detailed the options available to Members as set out in the report.

Resolved: That, under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting when considering item 13 (Minute 25) and Appendix 1 of Item 12 (Minute 24), on the grounds that likely disclosure of exempt information was involved as defined by Schedule 12A, Paragraph 3 (Relating to the business or financial affairs of a particular person (or the authority holding that information)).

Members discussed the report and the exempt information. Members also discussed the usefulness of CCTV for the security of the District.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That the report be noted and that officers further consider with the Councils partners the options presented in the technical report.

25. SDC Food Safety Plan

The Environmental Health Manager presented the exempt report which proposed the SDC Food Safety Plan 2022. The food safety plan detailed how the Environmental Health Team intended to meet and discharge its statutory obligations in respect of Food Safety. The Team had worked hard to meet and exceed objectives.

Members discussed the exempt report and thanked the Environmental Health Manager and his Team for all their hard work.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet, that it be recommended to Council to note the contents of the SDC Food Safety Plan 2022 and support its adoption.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.09 PM

CHAIRMAN