

EXECUTIVE, POLICY & COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY PANEL

**Minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2019 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber,
Council Offices, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.**

Present: Councillor Glenn Coleman-Cooke (Chairman); Councillors Curran, Bambridge, Campbell, Dixon, Rusiecki and Wright

In Attendance: Councillors Savage and Shonk

28. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Linda Potts.

29. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations made at the meeting.

30. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Councillor Campbell proposed, Councillor Curran seconded and Members agreed the minutes as a correct record of the meeting that was held on 13 November 2018.

31. CABINET MEMBER PRESENTATION

Councillor Savage, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Operational Services made a presentation on "How effective is the delivery of Operational Services to residents that are not regularly reported on." The presentation focused on the following areas of the Service:

Crematorium and cemeteries;
Commercial Waste;
Environmental Education;
Playgrounds;
Workshops & Fleet Management;
CCTV;
Coastal Development;
Parking.

The presentation detailed the key functions of each of the main areas of Operational Services and highlighted the performance of the service for the period from April 2018 to date. It was reported that the crematorium service had received a gold award and the burial service a silver award for the services offered to the public. The Memorial stability programme which had started in November last year had tested over 5,000.

The Commercial Trade Waste Service which had been introduced in July 2018 and had managed to cover its costs and was generating income that was expected to be about £130k at the end of the year. The service had 122 new customers signed up and over 170 tonnes had been collected since July 2018, with a four day weekly collection schedule.

The Panel was advised that the Environmental Education team had participated in the national trial to Keep Britain Tidy and experimented with signage on the Margate Main Sands. The signage provided information at a glance to the public on when dogs were allowed on the beach. The service was also working with the Council's Communications team to develop the anti-litter campaign for 2019.

The Service also conducted 37 annual ROSPA inspections on the Council's playgrounds and 1,500 weekly inspections. The repairs team had attended to 65 repairs and maintenance that were due to vandalism.

Council operated more than 75 main street cameras, more than 70 car park and stairwells cameras, 30 tower block cameras and 6 re-deployable mobile and covert cameras. The Service had provided 259 evidential videos for the Courts in 2018, 391 reviews by the Police in 2018. They had located numerous vulnerable and missing youths.

The civil enforcement team had issued over 20,000 PCNs between April and December last year. They received 492 abandoned vehicles cases and had removed 63 abandoned vehicles in 2018. They conducted 275 individual school safety enforcement visits last year and also introduced a new TDC Enforcement Twitter account through which the public could report enforcement matters directly to the department.

Since April 2018, the Street Scene Enforcement team had issued 59 FPNs (of £400 each), 190 PDAs, 772 Section 46 notices, 107 CPWs and 20 CPNs. They had conducted 60 commercial trade waste inspections and 3,755 street scene investigations. Dog wardens had attended to 172 reported cases of stray dogs and 173 noise complaints.

Responding to the presentation the Panel members made comments and asked questions as follows:

- This was a detailed and informative presentation;
- Was any of the revenue generated by the service especially from commercial waste collection put back to street cleaning?
- How much did the electric pavement cleaners cost? Would it be possible for a town council to buy these pavement cleaners through TDC in order to reduce costs?
- Was there an allocation in the 2019/20 capital programme budget for the purchase of more vehicles for the commercial trade waste collection?
- How would TDC support community group efforts for anti litter campaigns?
- Was there a programme for replacing the public bins in the Royal Harbour (Ramsgate)?

Councillor Savage and Trevor Kennett, Head of Operational Services responded as follows:

- Any income derived from waste collection went to the general fund for the council budget;
- From week beginning 04 February, there would be electric pavement cleaners being tested in some streets for a week. It was hoped that the Council would thereafter purchase a total of six electric cleaners. The machines which cost £16,975 each were capable of covering a lot more ground and could pick up more litter than manual cleaning. Town/Parish Councils could join hands with TDC to purchase the machines under a combined order at a reduced cost;
- With regards to the commercial trade waste – The approach was a soft launch of the service in order to slowly build it up and gradually grow the number of customers. The service started as two day collection per week but was now four days. The Council service was non-vatable making the service more competitive;
- The business plan for the commercial trade waste collection envisaged the use of the current vehicles in the first year (in 2018) and gradually growing in the second year onwards;
- The cameras installed at all the tower blocks had recording capability and were monitored. East Kent Housing owned those cameras;

- The Council issued out equipment to community groups to support anti litter local campaign efforts;
- 75 new public smart bins had been ordered to be placed at various points around Thanet. They were larger and would be used for both litter and dog waste.

Councillor Savage thanked Operational Services staff for the work of the department acknowledging the challenges the department faced.

The Panel thanked the deputy Leader for the presentation and noted the report.

32. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER UPDATE

Eden Geddes, Community Safety Manager introduced the report. He said that the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) gave discretion and flexibility to officers to exercise enforcement where the specified conduct was causing harassment, alarm and distress detrimental to the locality. Embedding this order into the daily work of enforcement officers had been slow. This was because there had been a delay in the delivery of signage material and training of council and police officers.

Mr Geddes further said that enforcement using these new powers started in earnest in September 2018. It was therefore too early to review the impact of the PSPO. To date there had been no fixed penalty notices issued for breaches of this PSPO. This was due in part to the fact that Kent Police policy prohibited police officers or PCSOs from issuing fixed penalty notices (FPNs) to any person under the age of 18. In addition, the Council's Community Safety Unit (CSU) took an incremental approach to enforcement. This meant that other options prior to issuing of an FPN for breach of PSPO were explored in the first instance.

The Council had procedures in place to issue penalty notices on behalf of Police/PCSOs. However it was worth noting that the CSU had limited resources. This created a future potential risk for a significant re-deployment from core duties; therefore this aspect would require regular reviewing. Interim review of the current Order was scheduled for March and the final evaluation set for September this year.

Members made further comments and asked questions as detailed below:

- In order to introduce the PSPO, there ought to have been evidence of anti social behaviour in a particular area to be affected by the Order. Would not issuing any fixed notice penalties since the introduction of the PSPO hamper extending the PSPO in the future?
- Under age drinking was becoming an issue in some licenced premises in Ramsgate;
- What support was given to women who were victims to threats of violence in the premises (in tower blocks) they lived in? These residents were scared to come out of their homes. This problem was usually associated with drug culture in these areas and more was needed to be done about it.

Eden Geddes Penny button, Head of Safer Neighbourhoods, and Trevor Kennett, gave the following responses:

- The PSPO was a process of ensuring compliance to the laws and not just the issuing of fines Current evidence is when individuals were challenged by police officers and PCSOs, they would comply. It had not been necessary to issue these penalties to date;
- Officers requested more detail to be forwarded to them so that they could pursue such reports on premises selling alcohol to under age individuals;

- Members were requested to advise residents to report criminal incidents to 999 in order for the Police to respond directly and these cases would also be forwarded to the Community Safety Unit to provide further support to victims in real time;
- The cameras in tower blocks were upgraded in 2018, regularly monitored and robust.

Members agreed to conduct another review of the impact of the PSPO in twelve months time and noted the report.

33. REVIEW OF EXECUTIVE SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2018/19

Members noted the report.

34. FORWARD PLAN & EXEMPT CABINET REPORT LIST FOR PERIOD 09 JANUARY 2019 - 30 JUNE 2019

Members noted the report.

Meeting concluded: 7.50 pm