



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Held at:	Council Chamber - Civic Centre, Folkestone
Date	Tuesday, 20 June 2017
Present	Councillors Miss Susan Carey, Peter Gane, Mrs Claire Jeffrey, Frank McKenna, Ian Meyers and Mrs Rodica Wheeler
Apologies for Absence	Councillor Ms Janet Holben and Councillor Michael Lyons
Officers Present:	Katharine Harvey (Head of Economic Development), Dave Illsley (Regeneration Officer), Sue Lewis (Committee Services Officer), Pat Main (Head of Finance) and Roger Walton (Head of Environmental Services)
Others Present:	Councillor Stuart Peall, Cabinet Member for Environment

11. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

12. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2017 were submitted, approved and signed by the Chairman.

13. **Cleansing, Folkestone town centre**

Report OS/17/02: As part of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's annual programme for 2017/18, Folkestone Town Council have requested that the committee review the Council's contractual arrangements with Veolia for street cleansing, as they are seeking more regular cleaning of the Town with the expect outcome of cleaner streets.

Roger Walton, Head of Environmental Services updated members on the arrangements with Veolia for street cleansing in Folkestone Town paying particular attention to the grading system the contractors work to, as shown in section 2.3 of the report.

The contract requires that should cleansing standards fall below the required standard then the contractor is required to rectify the situation within the timescales set by the grading system.

Mr Walton informed members that whilst the contract is based on performance Veolia deploy their staff based on routine rounds and so there is a staff presence in the town centre whose job it is to clear litter and detritus, check and clear the bins as necessary. This routine staff resource is supplemented when required by hit squads to deal with any particular hot spots .

Members paid particular attention to the following:

- It was noted that, although there are a number of recycling bins throughout the precinct it is not anticipated to add more as on inspection officers did not feel that the quality of recyclate collected was often quite poor.
- Members were informed that at peak times, such as carnivals, festivals and any major events held special arrangements will be put in place for bin collections.
- It was noted that during the extreme hot weather and the additional tourist footfall some of the bins struggled to cope with the amount of rubbish, particularly in and around the Burstin Hotel site.

Councillor Peall agreed to look at this with officers but informed members that there is a need to get the balance right on the size of the bins used as they are not attractive to tourists. Further checks will be brought in if required.

Members were encouraged to email Mr Walton or Councillor Peall of any particular areas of concern.

Proposed by Councillor Ms Susan Carey
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Rodica Wheeler and

Resolved:

To receive and note report OS/17/02.

(Voting: For 6; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

14. National Non Domestic Rates Locally-Administered Relief Scheme

Report C/17/13: This document outlines the proposals for the design and implementation of the locally-administered National Non Domestic Rates relief scheme as announced in the Chancellor's Spring Budget on 8 March 2017.

Pat Main, Head of Finance, presented members with the Cabinet report highlighting the following points:

- The Government are making available a national discretionary fund of £300 million over four years from 2017/18 to support businesses that face the steepest increases in their National Non Domestic Rates bill as a result of the 2017 revaluation ; 50% funded by Government with the rest funded through the Council's Section 31 grant.
- Local authorities are required to design their own local discretionary relief schemes and determine the eligibility of local ratepayers for support. Certain government criteria must be included in the schemes, as detailed in section 2 of the report.
- It is not recommended that businesses in arrears would be eligible for the scheme.
- In designing Shepway's proposed local scheme the authority has liaised with other Kent councils with the aim of adopting a similar approach.
- The deadline for submitting the locally-administered scheme criteria to Government is 30 June 2017.

Members were informed that the scheme would be managed by the Corporate Debt team in Finance with the Chief Finance Officer overseeing the process. They were also advised that the funding allocated by Government is currently considered to be sufficient to operate the scheme.

Particular attention was paid to those businesses that would be eligible, together with the criteria which the council will use which are set out in section 2 of the report.

An appeal procedure will be put in place similar to those already in operation for other relief schemes.

Proposed by Councillor Peter Gane
Seconded by Councillor Frank McKenna and

Resolved:

- 1. To receive a further report on the council's National Non Domestic Rates Locally-Administered Relief Scheme when the details have been developed.**

(Voting: For 6; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

Proposed by Councillor Peter Gane
Seconded by Councillor Frank McKenna and

Resolved:

- 2. To receive and note report C/17/13.**

(Voting: For 6; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

15. **"Spirit of the Leas" Folkestone Coastal Park Heritage Lottery Fund Grant**

Report C/17/14: Following Cabinet approval in September 2016, a round one grant application was submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for a project to improve access to Folkestone's Coastal Park. The round one application was successful and the HLF has awarded SDC a development grant of £40,300 to support a round two submission. This report seeks Cabinet approval for submission of a round two application and, should other contributions fail to materialize, agree to a growth bid item coming forward to be considered alongside other priorities at that time, to provide a match funding contribution of circa £130,000 in 2019/20.

Katharine Harvey, Head of Economic Development updated members on the progress so far and it was now time to request Cabinet to agree to the resources being committed to develop a round two application and to give an indication about the level of priority attached to meeting the match funding requirement of £133,000 if the bid is successful.

A number of ways will be explored to meet the match funding requirement, including from S106 funds through the Folkestone Seafront development and from a possibility of funding from Folkestone Town Council.

Members agreed that the area is an outstanding asset to the district and noted the intentions of the project as outlined in 1.2 of the report. They also agreed that it would be beneficial to link the works in this area to the town centre, encouraging tourism.

Members raised concerns in respect of where the additional funding might come from and agreed that a further report is brought back to committee providing more up to date information on this and the stage 2 submission when it is available. This is therefore taken into account in the recommendations below.

Proposed by Councillor Peter Gane
Seconded by Councillor Frank McKenna and

Resolved:

1. **To receive and note report C/17/14.**
2. **To support, in principal, the submission of a round two Heritage Lottery Fund application and to bring a further report back to committee before submission which outlines where the match funding will come from.**

(Voting: For 6; Against 0; Abstentions 0)