Responses to questions raised by members of Finance and Performance Sub Committee – Tuesday 8ᵗʰ March 2022.

Positive Community Leadership:

KPI: Number of new priority play areas improved by the Council: *What counts as an 'improvement' in relation to this KPI?*

Response: An improvement is deemed as any works taken place to an existing or new play area that meet objectives of the play strategy and action plan. This may include new equipment, or major refurbishment of existing equipment where it is of better value than to replace.

It would be useful to get some assurance from officers on where we are with installing new equipment or making improvements to our play areas that we are pursuing the issue of inclusivity. This is an important element of the improvements to ensure these areas have much wider access to all.

Response: As Identified in the play strategy officers are working to address inclusivity of all types throughout its play provision in the district. This may include ensuring play provision for a wider range of children throughout catchment areas of parks, and equipment that can be utilised by as many as possible. It is known that this is an area that will need focus and effort over a period of time to address this within relevant funding budgets and any grants that we may be council or partners may be able to access.

Is the new club house at Shorncliffe being adopted by the council along with the play area that has already been adopted?

Response: The clubhouse is part of the planning conditions of the Shornecliffe development and is due to be adopted by FHDC. We currently have the sports changing rooms as part of a license to use certain areas of the building and provide changing provision whilst final details are worked through.

KPI: Percentage of Food Premises broadly complaint – *Would be good to include moving forwards the actual figures of premises we are inspecting as a council throughout out a quarter.*

Response: The percentage of broadly compliant food businesses is calculated by comparing the number of food businesses that are assessed under the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme as 3 and above against those that are assessed as 2 and below. The calculation is not directly linked to the number of food hygiene inspections undertaken, but in Quarter 3 we completed 124 food hygiene inspections. This figure does not include revisits.

The food hygiene inspection programme is a rolling one and frequency of inspection is determined by the risk that food business poses. The highest risk premises are inspected every 6 months and medium risk premises, which most of our programme falls into, are inspected every 18 months to 2 years. New food premises are generally inspected within 28 days of registration.

Although the Food Standards Agency does monitor the numbers of food hygiene inspections local authorities undertake, they moved some years ago to measuring local authority effectiveness in regulating food safety by using the percentage of broadly compliant food businesses calculation. It is felt to be a much better measure of the levels of food business compliance with food law and has been adopted by the Food Standards Agency as a key performance indicator for all local authorities.

Currently we are following the Food Standards Agency COVID Recovery Plan, which is a two phased approach to returning to food hygiene inspection. The first phased focused on inspection of high risk food premises and new food businesses, the second phase, which we are now in, has moved to the high medium risk food businesses whilst still continuing with inspection of high risk and new food businesses.

A Thriving Environment:

KPI: Percentage of street lighting within the district converted to LED – *Comments in the report Reference a delay to the district wide roll out due to Folkestone Town Centre – How long will this delay be to the wider rollout?*

Response: The district wide LED upgrade orders have been placed and materials received for the phase 1 of the works (adoptable assets) and pre start survey works are currently being undertaken to enable the physical works to start in April/May. The project will be put on hold once the design for the town centre area has been confirmed and is completed, this is expected to be between 3-6months.

KPI: Number of new electric vehicle charging points installed within district owned car parks – *In the report there are sites referenced for EV charging points that due to come online in February 2022, has this been achieved? Are the sites reference in March 2022 to go online on track as well?*

Response: Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points at The Paddocks, Hythe and High Knocke, Dymchurch are now fully operational. The EV points a Tram Road, Folkestone and Wilberforce Road, Sandgate will be commissioned on the 17th March 2022. Civil works on remaining car parks have started, and they will now be fully operational by the end of April 2022.

KPI: Percentage of streets surveyed clear of littler within the district - *What percentage of the streets are surveyed within the district to obtain the quarterly surveyed figure in the report?*

Response: The two Contract Monitoring Officers aim to inspect a combined total of 250 locations each month across the district, so around 750 locations each quarter and this is used as the base figure for the street survey %.

KPI: Percentage of streets surveyed clear of littler within the district -*Commentary in the report makes references to fallen leaves. Are leaves being counted as litter?*

Response: No, leaves are naturally occurring and not deemed to be litter. However, if they are left on the ground so long that they degrade it should be considered "detritus", and the presence of that is monitored and recorded separately (and needs to be removed by Veolia).

KPI: Percentage of Household Waste Recycled: Commentary in the report refers to the impacts of garden waste being suspended. It would be useful moving forwards to get a breakdown percentage of garden waste and then purple bin/black box recycled waste. To understand the overall recycle percentages better.

Response: At present, 'provisional' figures for Q3 from Waste Data Flow show the following:

- *Percentage of household waste arising which have been sent for recycling stands at 25.63%*
- *Percentage of household waste sent for composting or anaerobic digestion stands at: 19.44%*

KPI: Average time for graffiti to be removed from the time of being reported– *The Chairman asked for more detailed figures to be provided.*

Response: In quarter 3 the Area Officer team removed over 1200 graffiti tags from buildings, bins, boxes anything that could be tagged, some were large set pieces, others small tags easily removed with a wipe. We managed to remove or obscure all offensive graffiti reported to us within 48 hours, usually within 2 hours.

A Vibrant Economy:

KPI: Total Folkestone & Hythe High Streets funds allocated - *No funds were allocated from the High Street Fund in Quarter 3. Further comms and social media is needed to encourage applications, along with officer time to support businesses in applying.*

Response: Officers in the Economic Development team are available to support any business or organisation looking to make an application to the Folkestone & Hythe

High Streets Fund. The current position regarding Fund spend was recently set out in the report (C/21/86) to support the Leaders Decision to extend the deadline for external applications to the 31 March 2023. This indicates that £1.48 million of the £3 million fund has been committed to date, with almost £665,000 being allocated to external businesses and organisations to make improvements to the district high streets. The remaining spend and commitments are for FHDC-led initiatives for Folkestone town centre. In terms of externally-led projects, around £425,000 has been allocated to Folkestone and just under £240,000 to other high streets in the district.

The ED team are undertaking further promotion and communication of the opportunity for external applications to the fund. This will be through direct emails, engagement in business forums, press releases by the Comms team and promotion on the Folkestone.works website and through social media channels.

KPI: Total Folkestone & Hythe High Streets funds allocated – *Commentary refers to the Levelling Up Fund – Is match funding possibly from the High Street Funds Folkestone Town Centre element?*

Response: At this stage, any match funding requirement for a Levelling Up Fund application for Folkestone town centre projects is yet to be determined.

KPI: Total funding allocated from the Romney Marsh Business Hub grant support scheme – *No applications were made in Quarter 3, further comms is needed. Local businesses were signposted and emailed. Could the hub make an application for IT equipment for hybrid meetings/conferences?*

Response: The agents acting for the East Kent Spatial Development Company (EKSDC), which is operating and managing the Romney Marsh Business Hub (RMBH), are aware of the RMBH grant scheme and are promoting this as part of their marketing. It would be possible for EKSDC to apply to the RMBH grant scheme for equipment such as IT equipment to enable hybrid meetings and conferences to take place at the hub and this option will be explored with EKSDC.

KPI: Number of businesses or potential entrepreneurs/ new start-ups signposted to support programmes and events to facilitate growth - *What methods of engagement are utilised?*

Response: Businesses are signposted to information provided on the Folkestone.works website through a number of means including direct engagement between ED officers and businesses, for example 1-2-1 meetings, through the Folkestone & Hythe Business Advisory Board and telecalls, through direct email communications, and via Folkestone.works and the council's own social media channels.

Quality Homes and Infrastructure:

KPI: Average number of rough sleepers in the period - *What are we doing as a district to reduce rough sleeping, are there any specific schemes or initiatives that we are pursuing to get the numbers further down?*

Response: We have range of services in place in the district to identify people and support people who are rough sleeping in the district:

- *Our outreach service provided in partnership with Serveco responds and makes contact with any individuals who are identified as rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping in the district. They are able to offer access to temporary accommodation and support services so that work can begin to help them access and retain long-term accommodation.*
- *The Council works in partnership with the Rainbow Shelter to provide the winter shelter accommodation to anyone in the district with a history of rough sleeping or who are at risk of rough sleeping. The winter shelter open on the 1st of December and closes on the 31 March. Work is underway to ensure that any remaining clients are assisted into long-term accommodation and where necessary support services.*
- *The Council itself has 3 properties (accommodating up to 4 people) which are specifically made available to people with a history of rough sleeping. People in the accommodation receive intensive support from Porchlight to help them maintain their tenancy and ensure that they access any necessary support services.*
- *The Council is able to provide rent in advance and rent deposits so that people are able to access private sector tenancies. We are also able to provide support through our outreach service to ensure that people are best placed to retain their accommodation.*
- *People are also able to join the Council's housing waiting list for an offer of accommodation through the Council and its housing association partners.*

KPI: Average Number of Households in Temp accommodation – *Figures have been balanced over the last three quarters, how many of these the same people/cases over these quarters in Temporary Accommodation?*

Response: Some people could be in temporary accommodation during more than one quarter period. On average, single people are in temporary accommodation for 10 weeks and families 13 weeks.

KPI: Affordable homes delivered by the Council and Partners – *Are these units to be added to the council housing stock or are they purely affordable private market rent homes provided by developers?*

Response: The indicator shows all of the new affordable homes provided in the district by the Council and its housing association partners. This includes affordable homes for rent and homes made available for shared ownership purchase. It does not include homes provided for rent by private developers.

KPI: Number of homelessness approaches– *It would be useful to know how many homelessness approaches were actually prevented in Quarter 3. This is a key figure that should be included in future editions of these reports.*

Response: The report shows number of approaches for the quarter (396) and approaches closed as 'homelessness prevented' shown as a percentage (4.8%). This is the most effective way to measure the PI, as the number of approaches can vary. The actual number of preventions for the quarter was 19. We can include the breakdown in the commentary going forward.

Transparent, Stable, Accountable and Accessible:

Data Breaches - *Is the level of breaches we are experiencing is comparable to other similarly sized organisations?*

Response: In order to benchmark the authority's Q3 breach incidence against that of our neighbours, the Data Protection Officers and Information Governance Specialists of Dover, Canterbury and Thanet district councils were consulted. It was agreed that the incidence rate across Quarter 3 was exceedingly low. Despite this, it should be remembered that data breach incidence is naturally changeable and cannot be easily forecast, which can result in significant variations of incidence between reporting periods."