

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday, 22nd May, 2024

Present: Cllr S A Hudson (Chair), Cllr A G Bennison, Cllr S Crisp, Cllr Mrs T Dean, Cllr G B Hines, Cllr F A Hoskins, Cllr J R S Lark, Cllr A McDermott, Cllr W E Palmer, Cllr M R Rhodes, Cllr Mrs M Tatton, Cllr D W King (substitute) and Cllr C J Williams (substitute)

In attendance: Councillors R P Betts, P M Hickmott, M A J Hood, and D Keers were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Virtual: Councillors L Athwal, M A Coffin, Mrs A S Oakley and K B Tanner participated via MS Teams in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs S Bell (Vice-Chair) and K S Tunstall.

CE 24/12 NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Notification of substitute members were recorded as set out below:

- Councillor C Williams substituted for Councillor S Bell
- Councillor D King substituted for Councillor K Tunstall

In accordance with Council Procedure Rules 17.5 to 17.9 these councillors had the same rights as the ordinary member of the committee for whom they were substituting.

CE 24/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

CE 24/14 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the notes of the meeting of the Communities and Environment Scrutiny Select Committee held on 7 February 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

MATTERS FOR CORPORATE MONITORING

CE 24/15 CORPORATE KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The report of the Interim Chief Executive provided data on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that were aligned to the Corporate Strategy 2023 – 2027 and monitored on a quarterly basis. The data provided related to the period up to the end of March 2024 and aimed to provide analysis about the performance of the Borough Council and support its improvement.

Members noted a number of positive trends in respect of attendance at the leisure facilities, referrals to One You Service, reported Anti-Social Behaviour cases and waste collection. Conversely, recycling and composting rates and fly tipping incidents had seen a negative trend, despite the fact that in the case of the latter the borough continued to perform well in comparison to other areas of Kent. Further detail on these trends were set out at 1.1.2 to 1.1.6 of the report.

Questions were raised over KPI Ref 029 regarding the number of prosecutions for fly tipping incidents and KPI Refs 021 – 023 regarding the timing for availability of the data and these would be investigated and responded to in due course.

MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET

CE 24/16 GRAFFITI UPDATE

The report of the Interim Chief Executive provided an update on the work to tackle graffiti in the borough, including feedback from the public consultation and the development of a graffiti policy.

With regard to the idea of a 'graffiti wall', Members noted that at present there was lack of evidence to prove the effectiveness of graffiti walls in reducing the incidents of illegal tagging within an area. Furthermore, operational and financial concerns in respect of the establishment and maintenance of a graffiti wall were also flagged.

Consideration was given to a draft Graffiti Policy, attached at Annex 2, which sought to clarify the responsibilities in respect of graffiti clearance and removal. Whilst the Borough Council did not have a statutory duty to remove graffiti on privately owned property, work with Community Payback scheme was ongoing with a view to removing graffiti from privately owned properties if deemed suitable and appropriate. Introduction of the Policy was welcomed by Members with particular reference made to its communication for awareness of members of the public and the wider community.

RECOMMENDED*: That

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) the lack of evidence of the effectiveness of graffiti walls to reduce illegal tagging be acknowledged; and
- (3) the Graffiti Policy, attached at Annex 2, be adopted.

***Recommended to Cabinet**

CE 24/17 COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2024 - 2025

(Decision Notice D240049MEM)

The report of the Interim Chief Executive presented a draft Community Safety Partnership Plan 2024/25, which gave details of the initiatives the Partnership had carried out during the previous year and set out details of the priorities for the forthcoming year.

Particular attention was drawn to the six priorities set by the Partnership for 2024/25, as detailed in 1.1.4 of the report, and it was noted that an Action Plan had been developed with partners for each of the priorities, as part of the Partnership Plan, and would be progressed during the year and monitored by the Community Safety Partnership Strategy Group.

Members welcomed the positive progress arising from the successful projects over the year and supported future actions as set out in the Plan for the next year.

RECOMMENDED*: That

- (1) the Community Safety Partnership Plan 2024/25, attached at Annex 1, be supported and endorsed.

***Decision Taken by Cabinet Member**

CE 24/18 AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA STATUS UPDATES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

(Decision Notice D240050MEM)

The report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health presented the monitoring results at the six Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in the borough and recommended revocation of the M20 AQMA in accordance with the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) Technical Guidance 2022 document (TG22), which provided the current statutory guidance as to how local authorities

should comply with the relevant legislation to monitor and tackle air pollution.

Members noted that, according to the TG22, there should not be any declared AQMAs for which compliance with the relevant objective (annual mean NO₂ concentrations being lower than 36 µg/m³, i.e. within 10% of the annual mean NO₂ objective) had been achieved for a consecutive 5-year period, which had been the case for the M20 AQMA, and if the respective NO₂ levels remained consistent in 2024 in the case of the other AQMAs with the exception of the Watringbury AQMA, they would also be recommended for review and revocation in 2025.

Furthermore, it was clarified that air quality monitoring across the borough, including within the current AQMAs, would continue following the revocation as recommended.

RECOMMENDED*: That

- (1) the M20 Air Quality Management Area be revoked; and
- (2) the status of the Air Quality Management Areas in Tonbridge High Street, Aylesford, Larkfield and Borough Green be acknowledged and reviewed again in 2025 with a view to revocation should monitoring results for 2024 be conducive.

***Decision Taken by Cabinet Member**

MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION

CE 24/19 DEVELOPING A PATHWAY TO CARBON NEUTRAL BY 2030

The report of the Interim Chief Executive presented Members with information on a modelled pathway of emissions reductions for major measures of the Borough Council to carbon neutral in 2030.

Members noted that the pathway was not a detailed analysis of all emissions sources, nor a commitment to particular action or a fully costed action plan, but a tool to bring together emissions reduction decisions taken service-by-service to present a picture of overall progress and would be subject to change over time.

The TMBC Pathway, attached at Annex 1, showed a potential route towards the carbon neutral by 2030 aspiration, modelled using credible assumptions that remained high level at this stage. It showed RAG ratings for each of the major emission sources and made clear the level of uncertainty for the major measures.

Particular reference was made to the Borough Council's successful bidding for the £1.5 million grants through the Sport England Swimming

Pool Support Fund and the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to support the energy efficiency measures to be implemented at the leisure facilities.

Overall, Members welcomed the positive progress made and recognised the challenges ahead whilst acknowledging the importance of keep all options under investigation and exploration.

CE 24/20 WORK PROGRAMME 2024

The Work Programme setting out matters to be scrutinised during 2024 was attached for information. Members were invited to suggest future matters by liaising with the Chair of the Committee.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE

CE 24/21 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no matters considered in private.

The meeting ended at 8.33 pm