

DARTFORD

BOROUGH COUNCIL



Summons and Agenda

Monday 7 October 2019

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'G. H. ...', positioned above the name of the Managing Director.

Managing Director
Friday 27 September 2019

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DARTFORD

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Civic Centre, Home Gardens, Dartford, Kent, DA1 1DR

To: All Members of the Dartford Borough Council

A meeting of the Council will be held on:

Date: Monday 7 October 2019
Time: 7.00 pm
Venue: Civic Centre, Dartford

The Agenda is set out below:

A G E N D A

1. **Prayers: Reverend Helen Reeves**

2. **Apologies for Absence**

To receive apologies for absence

3. **Declarations of Interest**

To receive declarations of interest from Members including the terms(s) of the Grant of Dispensation (if any) by the Audit Board or Managing Director.

4. **Minutes**

(Pages 1 - 8)

To approve the minutes of the meeting of the General Assembly of the Council held on 15 July 2019 as an accurate record.

5. **Mayor's Announcements**

6. **Leader's Announcements**

To receive announcements from the Leader of the Council

7. **Questions from Political Group Leaders**

To consider any questions (from the Political Group Leaders) to the Leader/Cabinet submitted in accordance with Standing Order 14.

8. Motions

To consider the following motions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 10:

(1) Motion submitted by Councillor K J Grehan:

‘That this Council notes:

- That analysis of the 2018 Local Election results by the Fawcett Society found that only 34% of councillors in England are women, up 1% since 2017;
- Of the seats that were up for election in 2018, 38% went to women, up just 3 percentage points on 2014 when these seats were last contested;
- That across England, Labour has improved its representation since seats were last up for grabs, with 45% women compared with 40% in 2014, Liberal Democrat representation up from 34% to 36% whilst the Conservative Party saw a fall from 31% to 29% in the share of its councillors who are female;
- That Dartford Borough Council currently consists of 15 women (35.7%) and 27 men (64.3%);
- That the role of a councillor should be open to all, regardless of their background, and that introducing a parental leave policy is a step towards encouraging a wider range of people to become councillors, and is also a step to encourage existing councillors who may want to start a family to remain as councillors;
- That parental leave must apply to parents regardless of their gender, and that it should also cover adoption leave to support those parents who choose to adopt; and
- That a parental leave policy will give certainty to councillors and councils alike when a councillor needs to take time off after the birth or adoption of a child, and the lack of parental leave would not be a deterrent to someone becoming a councillor.

That this Council resolves:

- To adopt the parental leave policy drafted by the LGA Labour Group's Women's Taskforce to give all councillors an entitlement to parental leave after giving birth or adopting; and
- To ensure that councillors with children and other caring commitments are supported as appropriate.'

(2). Motion submitted by the Leader of the Council, Councillor J A Kite MBE:

That this Council recognises the serious impact of climate change and accepts that rising global temperatures presents a clear and present threat to our world. We are facing a climate emergency.

The Council further recognises that all governments (national, regional and local) have a duty to act but feels that progress in Dartford should not be constrained by the actions of the slowest. Our town and its people have a part to play in securing a sustainable future and this Council must not only be a force for change in itself, but must inspire and encourage change in others.

It welcomes the Government's commitment to meet the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change target to cut greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050 but feels that, locally, we should aspire to act faster, and go further, to embed multiple actions across our community and local economy. Some measures may be quicker to yield results than others but the Council aspires to see the effects of climate change tackled earlier than either the 2050 national target or the 2030 date proposed by some.

It commits to pursuing measures that are deliverable, measureable and practical. It will inspire and promote efforts - small and large - to address climate change throughout our local community. It recognises that the interests of the environment are served not by empty promises or by setting one legitimate interest against another but by securing collaboration and a genuine commitment to change throughout the Borough and amongst our residents, neighbourhoods, businesses and wider

partners. It will co-operate with other authorities at every tier.

Dartford knows more than most about the particular challenges posed by rising traffic volumes and the impact on local air quality. We commit to increase our efforts to work with highways partners to reduce car use, resolve traffic issues in pollution hotspots and create workable, popular solutions within residential communities to prioritise pedestrians, cyclists and calmer, safer traffic.

It commits to make enlightened choices in our own supply chain and encourage other organisations to do the same with the aim of safeguarding resources and reducing pollution.

It notes the successful inauguration of the Leader's cross-party Working Group on Climate Change and commits to developing this group to include informed and representative local voices.

Finally, this Council sets itself the goal of making a contribution to tackling climate change to match any comparable local authority.

9. **Urgent Items**

The Mayor will announce his decision as to whether there are any urgent items.

To consider any reports to the General Assembly of Council by other Committees, Boards, Panels and Officers.

10. **References from other Committees (if any)**

11. **Capital Programme including Prudential Indicators - Outturn 2018/2019** (Pages 9 - 22)

To agree the capital budget carried forward into 2019/20.

12. **Crime and Disorder (Overview & Scrutiny) Committee Annual Report 2018-19** (Pages 23 - 52)

To receive the Crime and Disorder (Overview & Scrutiny) Committee Annual Report 2018-19.

13. **Reserved Minutes** (Pages 53 - 68)

To consider any of the minutes of the following Cabinet meetings reserved in accordance with Standing Order 16;

- (a) for full debate by Political Groups on the Council;
- (b) by Ward Members.

Cabinet

25 July 2019

5 September 2019

Graham Harris
Managing Director

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DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL

MINUTES of the proceedings of the meeting of the General Assembly of the Council held on Monday 15 July 2019.

PRESENT:

The Mayor

Councillor R S L Perfitt

Councillor Mrs A D Allen, MBE
 Councillor I D Armitt JP
 Councillor A E D Barham
 Councillor E H Ben Moussa
 Councillor S H Brown
 Councillor J Burrell
 Councillor D Butler
 Councillor S P Butterfill
 Councillor P Cutler
 Councillor M J Davis
 Councillor L H K Edie
 Councillor B Garden
 Councillor R Gosine
 Councillor S N Gosine
 Councillor K J Grehan
 Councillor D A Hammock
 Councillor P M Harman
 Councillor D E Hunnisett
 Councillor R A S Jones

Councillor J A Kite, MBE
 Councillor A R Lloyd
 Councillor T A Maddison
 Councillor C S McLean
 Councillor D J Mote
 Councillor D T Nicklen
 Councillor A J Oakley-Dow
 Councillor V Oguntope
 Councillor T Oliver
 Councillor Mrs J A Ozog
 Councillor M I Peters
 Councillor D J Reynolds
 Councillor L J Reynolds
 Councillor C J Shippam
 Councillor Mrs R F Storey
 Councillor D Swinerd
 Councillor Mrs P A Thurlow
 Councillor R J Wells

ABSENT:

Councillor L A Canham
 Councillor R M Currans
 Councillor A Gaskin
 Councillor A S Sandhu, MBE

27. PRAYERS: REVEREND HELEN REEVES

The Mayor's Chaplain led the Council in prayers.

28. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Canham, Currans and Gaskin.

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mote declared a prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 13, Members' Allowances-Update (minute 40) as he would be the recipient of a proposed new Special Responsibility Allowance, and took no part in the debate or voting on that item. There were no other declarations of interests.

30. MINUTES

Councillor Maddison reminded Members that when he welcomed the election of the new Mayor, Councillor Perfitt, at the Annual Council meeting he had also presented him with a card along with a donation cheque on behalf of the new Labour Group on the Council to start his charity appeal for his chosen charity, 'Ellenor' and felt that this should have been recorded in the minutes. It was agreed that the minutes should be amended to reflect this.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Annual Council meeting held on 22nd May 2019, as amended to record the donation to the Mayor's charity appeal by the Labour Group, were confirmed as an accurate record.

31. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor announced that he had enjoyed the first two months of his Mayoralty and in particular his visits to schools and meeting older people. He had also attended the Dartford Festival at the weekend and felt certain that the Leader of the Council would have more to say on the success of that event.

32. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader of the Council made the following announcements:

- **Dartford Festival 2019**

The Leader of the Council said that the Council continued to organise amazing events and that the Dartford festival was the pinnacle of these activities. The event was a raging success and the two acts on the Saturday evening had been particularly good. It was important that the Council gave something special back to local residents and once again the Council had delivered. He thanked Councillor Patsy Thurlow, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Arts and Culture, Adrian Gowan, Lewis Kirnon and their teams for all their hard work in organising the festival and making it so successful.

- **New Council**

The Leader of the Council noted that this was the first substantive Council meeting since the local elections in May. He welcomed new Councillors to the meeting and commented on the positive approach of the Labour Group so far, which he hoped would carry on and that the political groups would continue to work together productively in the future. He commented that it was important

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for the Council to fulfil the promises made during campaigning and that the Council had delivered all but one of the pledges made by his Group in their 2011 and 2015 manifestos, the only one that it had been unable to deliver in each case being the result of the approach taken by Tesco. This was now being addressed.

- **Play Places**

The Leader of the Council announced that the Council was actively looking at opportunities to establish new accessible play places. The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Arts and Culture and the Lead Member for Open Spaces and Heritage were already working on the delivery of new play places and green spaces and this would be an important area of work for the Council.

- **Leaders' Advisory Group on Road Safety**

The Leader of the Council reminded Members that towards the end of the last Administration he had established a Leaders' Advisory Group on Road Safety and that he wanted to formally restart this work. He highlighted the good work already carried out by the Group and said that Kent County Council had recently made encouraging noises regarding the introduction of 20 mph zones and had given their support to go ahead. He intended to organise meetings of the Group during the Autumn to progress this important area of work.

- **Road Safety Mirrors in Fleetdown**

The Leader of the Council advised Members that new road safety mirrors had been successfully sited at a hazardous point in Fleetdown following a serious accident and represented a small but important success.

- **Climate Change**

The Leader of the Council said that during his recent holiday he had made the time to read extensively about climate change and he had been prompted to call the Shadow Leader of the Council to discuss this and ways that the Council could address these issues and that he had been receptive and supportive. The Leader of the Council said that climate change was one of the issues that affected everyone's lives and he felt that the Council should take a leadership role. There had been leadership at national and county level but the Council dealt directly with the local community and had an important role to play. He said that whilst there might be honourable disagreements over approach and timeframes there was a clear need to do something and that the Council needed to take its responsibility to future generations seriously. He cited examples of projects already delivered by the Council in an environmentally friendly manner, the development of Princes Park stadium which had won awards for 'green architecture', the work to refurbish Central Park and at Hesketh Park, and new play spaces in Greenhithe and elsewhere. He recognised that it was impossible to change everything

overnight but he wanted the Council to take a lead and be an exemplar; to take a lead in Kent and to be recognised as being at the forefront of activity to tackle climate change. He announced that he intended to establish a cross party working group to tackle this issue. He wanted to take a robust approach which delivered results but in doing so it was important to focus on what the Council could deliver and also to recognise the limitations on what it could do in order to establish realistic but challenging targets and deliverables. He informed Members that he had already shared his vision for the initiative with the Shadow Leader and that his Group looked forward to working closely across the Council on this issue. He felt that this was a good opportunity for the political groups to show mutual trust and to work together and that it was important to engage with the local community and to get it on-side. He recognised that Dartford had particular challenges around air quality and traffic congestion which needed careful management and the Council should not rely on others to address these issues. It was important to find solutions and recognise the need to break the cycle. The first step, however, was to engage with the community. He said that he was starting this work with hope and the promise to endeavour and that by working together the Council could make a real difference and that the Council worked best when it worked together towards a common goal.

The Shadow Leader of the Council thanked the Leader of the Council for his kind words and re-iterated that his group was committed to working as a community and that climate change affected everybody and the futures of their children and grandchildren. It was important to work together and to get this work underway. He noted that Gravesham had set targets for climate change by 2030 and said that the Council should be competitive and set a more challenging target and demonstrate that Dartford was the most progressive council in Kent.

33. QUESTIONS FROM POLITICAL GROUP LEADERS

The following questions were submitted by the Shadow Leader of the Council:

Question 1

'With the summer holidays beginning the end of the month, what support is the council providing to the almost 7000 children growing up in poverty, to maintain a nourished diet through this holiday period which can add up to between £30 and £40 a week for parents already struggling financially?'

Question 2

'Although the council already has some preventative mechanisms in place for rough sleepers and support networks to accessing services. Would the Council consider applying for such a grant in aide of going that one step further by providing emergency accommodation 24/7 rather than just for the extra cold nights?'

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In accordance with Standing Order 14 the questions and answers, including any supplementary questions and answers, are recorded in a book kept for this purpose in the Members' Area.

34. MOTIONS

No motions were submitted under Standing Order 10.

35. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

36. COUNCIL IN COMMITTEE

It was moved by Councillor R S L Perfitt, seconded by Councillor J A Kite and

RESOLVED:

That in accordance with Standing Order 11(13) the General Assembly of the Council go into Committee and the rules of Procedures for Committees do apply.

THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, COUNCILLOR J A KITE MBE, IN THE CHAIR

37. REFERENCES FROM OTHER COMMITTEES (IF ANY)

There were no references from other committees.

38. WORK PLAN FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL 2019/20

The General Assembly of the Council considered its proposed Work Plan for 2019-20.

RESOLVED:

That the Work Plan, attached at Appendix A to the report, be approved as the General Assembly of the Council's Work Plan for the 2019-20 Municipal Year.

39. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

The Leader of the Council made some introductory comments about the importance of the work carried out by the Council's scrutiny committees in general in holding the Cabinet and himself to account and providing balance to the work of the Cabinet. The work carried out by the Scrutiny Committee during 2018-19 was described in its annual report and it was important that all political groups supported this work to get value from the process. Councillor Davis, who had been the Vice-Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee during 2018-19, thanked Members for their support and recorded his thanks to David

Hook, Democratic Services Officer, for his work with the committee and for preparing the Annual report.

RESOLVED:

That the Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2018-19 be noted.

40. MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES - UPDATE

The Leader of the Council introduced a report which updated Members on the current level of Members' Allowances and the work being carried out by the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) to review the Scheme of Members' Allowances with a view to making recommendations on a revised Scheme to the General Assembly of the Council in December 2019. Members were also asked to approve a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) for the Chairman of the newly created Strategic Housing Board at a level commensurate with that paid to the Chairman of the Development Control Board.

Members asked for details on how the Independent Remuneration Panel was appointed and the Leader of the Council explained that the panel was appointed by the Council following a process of public advertisement and interviews conducted by the leaders of the political groups who then recommended the appointments to the Council. The IRP was required to review the Scheme of Members Allowances every 4 years and to submit their recommendations to the Council, although ultimately it was the Council which determined the levels of allowances and the purposes for which they were paid. Members also asked for clarification on how it had been determined that the new allowance for the Chairman of the Strategic Housing Board should be commensurate with that paid to the Chairman of the Development Control Board given that the latter was a statutory quasi-judicial body meeting monthly whereas the new Strategic Housing Board was an advisory body meeting quarterly. The Leader of the Council explained that this reflected the importance of housing and the work that the new Board was being tasked with. He explained that formerly there had been a Cabinet Member with responsibility for housing who had been paid a higher allowance so that the proposal actually delivered a reduction in the overall level of allowances. He confirmed that the new allowance would also be reviewed by the IRP as part of its current review.

RESOLVED:

1. That the progress of the Independent Remuneration Panel in undertaking its review of the Scheme of Members' Allowances be noted;
2. That the current levels of allowances be noted; and
3. That a new Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chairman of the Strategic Housing Board be agreed in line with the current Special Responsibility Allowance paid to the Chairman of the Development Control Board.

CHAIRMAN'S
INITIALS

CHAIRMAN'S INITIALS

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41. RE-CONVENING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL

It was moved by Councillor J A Kite, seconded by Councillor C J Shippam and

RESOLVED:

That in accordance with Standing Order 11(14) the General Assembly of the Council now re-convene.

THE MAYOR, COUNCILLOR R S L PERFITT, IN THE CHAIR

42. RESERVED MINUTES

The Mayor announced that one Cabinet minute had been reserved for debate in accordance with Standing Order 16(14)(1)(a).

- **Minute 108 – Award of Refuse Collection and Street Cleansing Contract 2019-2024 – (Cabinet – 24 January 2019)**

The Shadow Leader explained that he had reserved this minute for debate because of concerns around the performance of the contract. He noted that the new contract had taken effect on 1st July and that a new contractor, Urbaser, had taken over from Amey. Despite the transitional arrangements outlined to Cabinet on 24th January to ensure that high performance was maintained during the changeover period this was not the experience of his Group and their constituents. There had been many complaints from residents about missed collections and waste not being collected on time. Another Member said that constituents in her ward were being poorly served and not just in terms of waste collection but also on street cleansing and asked for assurance that there would be an improvement in future. Another Member quoted an incident where constituents had waited for 4 weeks to have their waste collected and described problems with the online facility to report missed collections and when trying to call the Council. A Member said that he had also had complaints from constituents but recognised that this was a particularly complex contract and the new contractor should be given the time to bed-in and address the issues. He also praised the efforts of the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Waste and Recycling in dealing with residents and for providing leadership during the changeover period.

The Leader of the Council reminded Members that the report to Cabinet was now 6 months old and that the changeover period related to a whole raft of negotiations and reconfigurations necessary to move to a new contract. The transition to the new contract was very complicated as the contract related to the weekly collection of over 40,000 bins and concerned arrangements to transfer the fleet of vehicles, equipment and staff to the new contractor. This had generally gone well. However despite the best efforts of Members and Officers he accepted that the service delivered by Amey in the last weeks of the contract had not been impressive and had resulted in rectification notices being issued. He had asked to be copied in to every email to the Council

which related to service issues and during the last weeks of the contract it seemed obvious that Amey had not demonstrated levels of service that the Council wished to see. Despite commitments to carry out all collections by the handover date, and offering staff overtime to work over the final weekend, the collection performance was not acceptable. As a result refuse was not collected from significant numbers of roads.

For this reason, Urbaser, had inherited a considerable backlog and had worked very hard to clear this whilst trying to embed their own improved systems and processes. The number of complaints about in-week missed bins had fallen markedly since 1st July and the backlog was being cleared. Urbaser's performance monitoring systems and processes were far better than Amey's and the approach demonstrated by Urbaser was a breath of fresh air. During their first weeks of operating the contract Urbaser had achieved a 99% accuracy rate in terms of its contracted collections. It was now a matter of the Council rebuilding to regain the trust and faith of residents which would only be possible by ensuring that service performance attained high levels and that this was maintained. He also explained that any additional cost of work carried out by Urbaser to undertake work inherited from Amey could be deducted from the final payment made to Amey under the previous contract. He also encouraged Members to keep up to date with progress by monitoring the Cleaner Dartford twitter feed which had been specifically provided to offer a daily update. He told Members that whilst the feed was not monitored or intended to accept individual service issues, which should continue to be reported via the Council's website to ensure that they were added to the contractors list of rectifications, the Twitter service provided an update for that day's service levels.

The meeting closed at 8.27 pm

MAYOR

CHAIRMAN'S INITIALS

CABINET
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Capital Programme Including Prudential Indicators - Outturn 2018/2019

1. Summary

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the final pre-audit figures for the 2018/19 Capital Programme, the capital resources that were used to fund it and those that remain available to fund future investment.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That Cabinet note the draft outturn for the Capital Programme for 2018/19.
- 2.2. That Cabinet note the draft outturn position for 2018/19 on Capital resources, and the balance available to be carried forward into 2019/20.
- 2.3. That the Cabinet recommend the total capital budget carried forward into 2019/20, as set out in Appendix C to the General Assembly of the Council.
- 2.4. That Cabinet note the outturn position on the Capital Prudential Indicators as shown in Appendix D.
- 2.5. That Cabinet agree a virement of 2019/20 budget from the new homes budget to the projects listed in Appendix C
- 2.6. That the General Assembly of the Council be asked to agree the capital budget carried forward into 2019/20 as per Appendix C, thereby increasing the total capital budget to £30.771m

3. Background and Discussion

- 3.1. The original budget for the 2018/19 Capital Programme was approved by the Council on 26 February 2018 at £24.891m and was later increased by the General Assembly of the Council to include funding for continuing projects carried forward from 2017/18. The final approved budget for the year was £25.983m.
- 3.2. The probable outturn of £17.886m was reported to the GAC on 25 February 2019.
- 3.3. The final outturn (subject to audit) on the Capital Programme was £18.069m.

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3.4. Appendix A details the outturn for 2018/19, and the resources available to fund future years' projects, which specifically relate to Housing; Appendix B gives the same information for all other projects. Both show the:

- Current Approved Budget – the original budget plus any approved variations during the year.
- Probable Outturn – the indicative outturn position as reported to the General Assembly of the Council on 25 February 2019.
- Outturn – the actual outturn for the year.
- Variance – the difference between probable and actual outturn
- Resources: showing the resources brought forward from earlier periods, those added in the year, how much was used to finance capital expenditure in 2018/19, and the amount available to be carried forward to fund future expenditure.

Appendix C shows the residual budget requirement necessary to complete 2018/19 projects, which will be carried forward into 2019/20.

Appendix D shows the outturn position on the Capital Prudential Indicators.

3.5 Reasons for the main variances (over £50,000 in value) between the probable outturn and the actual outturn are detailed below:

Council Housing Projects – more than projected £496,000

Overall, there was a spend of £496,000 against the estimate. The net overspend was the result of a higher spend on new housebuilding offset by a few underspends on decent homes budgets. The overspend on new housebuilding will mean fewer resources are required next year.

The major individual variances within this sum were as follows:

Rewiring – more than projected £66,000:

There was better access to properties and also more void rewires than expected.

Kitchens and Bathrooms – Less than projected £59,000:

Programming can be difficult for kitchens and bathrooms as it is not always convenient for tenants hence the potential to underspend.

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Roof Renewal - less than projected by £179,000:

The weather and consultation process were the main reasons for the reduced spend on this budget.

New Housebuilding – more than projected by £765,000:

There were two reasons for the higher spend. Firstly, accounting rules require that any retention held is included in the accounts in that year and not when actually paid. For 2018/19 the retention was £250,000 and this was not included when estimating the probable outturn. Secondly, works were progressed quicker than expected meaning some properties were available sooner.

Backlog

There is still a backlog of HRA repairs. As at 31 March 2019 this stood at £3.3m (£3.6m in 2017/18). These repairs are continuously reviewed and updated by the Housing Maintenance Manager and are included in programmes of work, as appropriate. A sum of £6.3m is set aside in 2019/20 for works to the existing HRA stock and it is considered that the backlog sum is manageable in the context of the overall capital and revenue works programmes.

General Fund Projects: overall, the programme underspent against the projection by £313,000. There were two significant variances from those previously reported:

Stone Lodge – less than projected of £493,000

The project has been delayed by about 8/10 weeks in total due to a delay with the sub-contractor for the buildings steel frame and other small contractor procurement delays. This has had a knock on effect causing a delay to the installation of the 3G pitch in order to avoid dust or other damage to the surface during the continued building construction. This has meant large payments that should have been processed will be drawn down at a later date.

The project is now expected to complete in August 2019.

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Civic Centre (internal repairs and improvements) – £152,000 more than projected

There was an acceleration in the pace of works in the last three months of the year with more work being completed than thought likely when the probable outturn was estimated.

Appendix C shows the residual budget requirement in 2019/20 necessary to complete projects from 2018/19. In many cases the residual budget required is the difference between the probable outturn and actual outturn.

The budget requested for Housing projects is £238,000. Because the new housebuilding programme spent more in 2018/19 than expected, less expenditure will be required to complete the current commitments in 2019/20 so the additional budget requested can be met from a budget virement from new homes thereby reducing the 2019/20 budget from £5.282m to £5.044m.

The budget roll-over requested for General Fund projects is £503,000. This is less than the underspend on the total General Fund budget and the additional expenditure can be funded from the capital resources not spent in 2018/19.

3.6 Capital Resources

- 3.6.1 Capital receipts of £2.262m were received in respect of redemptions relating to the discounted sale scheme at The Bridge. Additionally capital receipts relating to the Bridge development project of £810,000 were receivable.
- 3.6.2 Right to Buy sales: a total of 17 properties were sold during the year, the same as in 2017/18. These sales produced a capital receipt of £2.306m, of which £407,000 was paid to MHCLG under legislation concerning the pooling of housing capital receipts. A sum of £1.412 is earmarked as “one for one” receipts and must be used on the provision of new social housing within three years of receipt, and match-funded in a ratio of 30:70 from other eligible funding sources.
- 3.6.3 Other miscellaneous receipts totalling £373,000 were also received.
- 3.6.4 In addition to the income shown in Appendix B, £3.517m from The Bridge development was applied to the Capital Adjustment Account in order to reduce the Councils Capital Financing requirement. This, together with revenue contributions was applied to the Capital Adjustment Account in order to reduce the Council’s General Fund Capital Financing requirement from its current level of £3.8m. This will remove the annual minimum revenue provision charge to the General Fund.

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- 3.6.5 The balance of usable receipts for general use is to be carried forward into 2019/20 is £7.402m, while that of receipts restricted to New Build schemes stands at £4.393m making a total of £11.795m available to invest in the Council's assets.
- 3.6.6 Unapplied capital grants totalling £437,000 are being carried forward into 2019/20 and are available to finance future expenditure.
- 3.6.7 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) capital receipts of £4.6m are also held, to be used on future projects to be agreed by Cabinet.

4 Relationship to the Corporate Plan

The capital programme covers many individual projects and will contribute to meeting many of the objectives in the Corporate Plan.

5 Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

Financial Implications	The draft outturn on capital funded projects for 2018/19 is £18.1m, and the capital resources to be carried forward into 2019/20 total £17.6m (inclusive of £4.4m '141 receipts'). Because the projects listed in Appendix C were not completed in 2018/19, Cabinet is asked to recommend to GAC the approval of an overall increase in the 2018/19 capital budget of £503,000. As noted in paragraph 3.5 this can be funded from existing resources.
Legal Implications	None
Staffing Implications	None
Administrative Implications	None
Risk Assessment	The accounts are in draft and subject to audit

6 Appendices

Appendix A - Capital Programme, Budget and Resources– Housing Projects 2018/19

Appendix B - Capital Programme, Budget and Resources – Other Projects 2018/19

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Appendix C - Capital Budgets - Proposed Carry Forward into 2019/20

Appendix D - Capital Prudential Indicators 2018/19

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<u>Documents consulted</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>File Ref</u>	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Section and Directorate</u>	<u>Exempt Information Category</u>
			Tim Sams 01322 343148	Financial Services Internal Services	N/A

CAPITAL PROGRAMME - BUDGET, OUTTURN & RESOURCES**HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2018/2019**

	CURRENT BUDGET 2018/2019 £'000s	PROBABLE OUTTURN 2018/2019 £'000s	OUTTURN 2018/2019 £'000s	VARIANCE £'000s
COUNCIL HOUSING PROJECTS				
Disabled Adaptations	250	250	252	2
Decent Homes Works:				
Central Heating Renewals	914	750	716	(34)
Rewiring	1,000	1,000	1,066	66
Asbestos Removal	75	150	146	(4)
Rising Main Replacement	25	15	20	5
Door Replacements	100	100	70	(30)
Kitchen and Bathrooms	1,100	1,100	1,041	(59)
External Wall Rendering	1,490	1,560	1,559	(1)
Insulation Upgrades	0	16	0	(16)
Door Entry Systems	75	125	109	(16)
Fascia /Soffit Replacements	307	307	355	48
Roof Renewal	1,090	1,090	911	(179)
Roof Tanks/Water Mains Supply	50	50	0	(50)
Communal Areas	705	705	749	44
External Chimneys	35	18	0	(18)
Lift Replacement	25	25	1	(24)
Supported Housing	150	150	149	(1)
Major Repairs	50	30	26	(4)
Other Projects:				
New Homes	3,890	4,941	5,706	765
Purchase of New HRA Property	0	276	280	4
SUB TOTAL : COUNCIL HOUSING PROJECTS	11,331	12,658	13,154	496
Resources	Brought Forward £'000s	Additions in Year £'000s	Used to Fund Capital Expenditure £'000s	Reimbursement of 1-4-1 Receipts £'000s
Major Repairs Reserve	0	3,462	(3,462)	0
Contribution from Revenue	0	5,025	(5,025)	0
New Capital Receipts	0	275	(275)	
RTB Retention Scheme: 1-4-1 receipts	4,693	1,411	(1,712)	0
Capital Financing Requirement	0	2,681	(2,681)	0
	4,693	12,854	(13,154)	0

**CAPITAL PROGRAMME - BUDGET, OUTTURN & RESOURCES
GENERAL FUND 2018/2019**

	CURRENT BUDGET 2018/2019 £'000s	PROBABLE OUTTURN 2018/2019 £'000s	OUTTURN 2018/2019 £'000s	VARIANCE £'000s
Capital Projects				
Acacia Hall	4,310	526	545	19
IT Equipment	112	112	119	7
The Orchard Theatre	25	25	0	(25)
Other Corporate Properties	30	79	114	35
Town Centre Heritage Scheme	200	1	1	(0)
Central Park	75	50	71	21
Stone Lodge	3,690	2,592	2,099	(493)
Town Centre Transport and Public Realm Improvements	4,000	703	722	19
Fairfield Improvement Works	311	10	0	(10)
Civic Centre Refurbishment:				
Internal Repairs and Improvements	626	330	482	152
Essential External Repairs	454	366	352	(14)
Community Infrastructure Levy Expenditure	200	0	0	0
Pay and Display Replacement Machines	55	55	51	(4)
Green Deal - Residual	0	2	1	(1)
Housing Projects				
Disabled Facilities Grants	545	358	360	2
Private Sector Renewal	19	19	0	(19)
Total General Fund Projects	14,652	5,228	4,915	(313)
Resources	Brought Forward £'000s	Additions in Year £'000s	Used to Fund Capital Expenditure £'000s	Carried forward £'000s
Capital Receipts (net of pooling)	7,465	3,659	(3,723)	7,402
Grants & Contributions	385	2,022	(1,151)	1,255
Grants & Contributions - CIL	3,479	1,143	0	4,622

Revenue Contribution

<u>0</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>(42)</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>11,329</u>	<u>6,865</u>	<u>(4,915)</u>	<u>13,278</u>

CAPITAL BUDGETS - PROPOSED CARRY-FORWARD INTO 2019/20

	Approved Budget 2018/19 £'000	Probable Outturn 2018/19 £'000	Outturn 2018/19 £'000	Proposed virement/carry forward to 2019-20 £'000	Budget Approved 2019/20 £'000	Proposed Revised Budget 2019/20 £'000
2018/19 Projects requiring a residual budget for completion in 2019/20						
Housing Revenue Account - virement proposed from new homes budget						
Kitchen and Bathrooms	1,100	1,100	1,041	59	1,030	1,089
Roof Renewal	1,090	1,090	911	179	115	294
	<u>2,190</u>	<u>2,190</u>	<u>1,952</u>	<u>238</u>	<u>1,145</u>	<u>1,383</u>
General Fund: Roll forward of budget requested						
Stone Lodge	3,690	2,592	2,099	493	2,340	2,833
Fairfield Improvement Works	311	10	0	10	85	95
	<u>4,001</u>	<u>2,602</u>	<u>2,099</u>	<u>503</u>	<u>2,425</u>	<u>2,928</u>

PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2018/19

The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Authority to have regard to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code) when determining how much money it can afford to borrow. The objectives of the Prudential Code are to ensure, within a clear framework, that the capital investment plans of local authorities are affordable, prudent and sustainable, and that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice. To demonstrate that the Authority has fulfilled these objectives, the Prudential Code sets out the following indicators that must be set and monitored each year.

Estimates of Capital Expenditure: The Authority's capital expenditure and financing may be summarised as follows.

Capital Expenditure and Financing	2018/19 Actual £m	2018/19 Projected Outturn £m	2019/20 Estimate £m	2020/21 Estimate £m
General Fund	4.915	5.228	18.836	5.524
HRA	13.154	12.658	12.267	8.600
Total Expenditure	18.069	17.886	30.268	15.466
Capital Receipts	5.709	5.885	10.875	2.554
Government Grants	1.151	1.080	9.595	5.038
Revenue/ Reserves	8.528	8.240	9.798	7.839
Debt/Capital Financing Requirement	2.681	2.681	0	0
Total Financing	18.069	17.886	30.268	15.466

An additional £3.157m of capital receipts was used to reduce the General Fund CFR during the period.

Estimates of Capital Financing Requirement: The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) measures the Authority's underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose.

Capital Financing Requirement	31.03.19 Actual £m	31.03.19 Estimate £m	31.03.20 Estimate £m	31.03.21 Estimate £m
General Fund	0	0	0	0
HRA	55,852	55,852	51,409	46,966
Total CFR	61.445	56.695	52.098	47.349

Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement: In order to ensure that, over the medium term, debt will only be for a capital purpose, the Authority should ensure that debt does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of capital financing requirement in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current and next two financial years. This is a key indicator of prudence.

Debt	31.03.19 Actual £m	31.03.19 Estimate £m	31.03.20 Estimate £m	31.03.21 Estimate £m
Borrowing	55.852	55.852	51,409	46,966
Total Debt	55.852	55.852	51,409	46,966

Total debt is expected to remain at the CFR during the forecast period.

Operational Boundary for External Debt: The operational boundary is based on the Authority's estimate of most likely (i.e. prudent but not worst case) scenario for external debt. It links directly to the Authority's estimates of capital expenditure, the capital financing requirement and cash flow requirements, and is a key management tool for in-year monitoring. Other long-term liabilities comprise finance leases and other liabilities that are not borrowing but form part of the Authority's debt. The level set includes an allowance for the possibility of significant payments due to successful business rate appeals. Debt remained within boundaries during the period.

Operational Boundary	2018/19 £m	2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m
Borrowing	100	100	100
Other long-term liabilities	0	0	0
Total Debt	100	100	100

Authorised Limit for External Debt: The authorised limit is the affordable borrowing limit determined in compliance with the Local Government Act 2003. It is the maximum amount of debt that the Authority can legally owe. The authorised limit provides headroom over and above the operational boundary for unusual cash movements.

Authorised Limit	2018/19 £m	2019/20 £m	2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m
Borrowing	120	120	120	120
Other long-term liabilities	0	0	20	20
Total Debt	120	120	120	120

Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream: This is an indicator of affordability and highlights the revenue implications of existing and proposed capital expenditure by identifying the proportion of the revenue budget required to meet financing costs, net of investment income.

Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream	2018/19 Revised %	2018/19 Projected Outturn %	2019/20 Original Estimate %	2020/21 Original Estimate %
General Fund	-15.56	-11.2	-5.55	-5.51%
HRA	6.71	6.85	6.39	6.00

The General Fund ratio is negative because interest revenues exceed financing costs.

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL
7 October 2019

CRIME AND DISORDER (OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY)
COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19

1. Summary

1.1 To note the work carried out by the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee during the last municipal year.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the Annual Report of the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee 2018-19 be noted.

3. Background and Discussion

3.1. In accordance with the Terms of Reference of the Committee, the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee Annual Report 2018-19 is attached as Appendix A for consideration.

3.2. The Committee considered the report at its meeting held on 24 July 2019 and recommended that it be submitted to the next meeting of the GAC for consideration.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

Not applicable.

5. Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

Financial Implications	None
Legal Implications	None
Staffing Implications	None
Administrative Implications	None
Risk Assessment	No uncertainties and/or constraints

6. Details of Exempt Information Category

Not applicable.

7. Appendices

Appendix A – Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee Annual Report 2018-19 and its appendices.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL
7 October 2019

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<u>Documents consulted</u>	<u>Date / File Ref</u>	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Section and Directorate</u>	<u>Exempt Information Category</u>
Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee Agenda and Minutes (2018-19)		Alan Twyman Democratic Services Manager	Democratic Services	N/A

**CRIME AND DISORDER (OVERVIEW and SCRUTINY)
COMMITTEE**

24 July 2019

Appendix A

**CRIME AND DISORDER (OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY)
COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19**

1. Summary

To consider a report on the work carried out by the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee during the preceding 2018-19 municipal year.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That, subject to any amendments proposed by Members, the *draft* annual report on the Committee's work during the 2018-19 municipal year (attached as Appendix A to this report) be approved, and submitted to the General Assembly of the Council.

3. Background and Discussion

3.1. In accordance with its Protocol (considered elsewhere) the Committee is required to report annually to the General Assembly of the Council (GAC) on the work it has undertaken during the preceding municipal cycle.

3.2. A *draft* Annual Report detailing the work undertaken by the Committee during the 2018-19 municipal year is attached at Appendix A for Members consideration and comment, prior to submission to the GAC.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

The work of the Committee supports the aim of creating safer communities and a safer Borough in which to live, work and socialise.

5. Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

Financial Implications	None
Legal Implications	None
Staffing Implications	None
Administrative Implications	None
Risk Assessment	No uncertainties and/or constraints

6. Details of Exempt Information Category

Not applicable.

**CRIME AND DISORDER (OVERVIEW and SCRUTINY)
COMMITTEE**

24 July 2019

7. Appendices

Appendix A: Crime and Disorder (O&S) Committee *draft* Annual Report for the 2018-19 municipal year;

Appendix B: Committee Terms of Reference [May 2019];

Appendix C: Memorandum of Understanding with Dartford & Gravesham Community Safety Partnership (CSP) [June 2015]

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<u>Documents consulted</u>	<u>Date / File Ref</u>	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Section and Directorate</u>	<u>Exempt Information Category</u>
Crime and Disorder (O&S) Protocol (June 2019), MoU with D&G CSP (June 2015), ToRs (22 May 2019), Annual Report 2017/18, Committee Agendas and Minutes dated 25 July 2018 and 13 February 2019	July 2019	David Hook Committee Coordinator Democratic Services (01322 343276)	Democratic Services/ Executive Directorate (ES)	N/A

APPENDIX A



**CRIME AND DISORDER
(OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY)
COMMITTEE**

Draft Annual Report 2018-19

APPENDIX A**Introduction and Background**

The Council has a legal duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to carry out all of its various functions with regard to the need to prevent crime and disorder and reduce re-offending in its area. '*Crime and Disorder*' is defined as including forms of crime and disorder that involve anti-social behaviour or other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment or the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances.

The **Crime and Disorder (Overview & Scrutiny) Committee** was appointed by the General Assembly of the Council (GAC) in October 2009 under the provisions of the Police and Justice Act 2006 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and in direct response to the provisions of the subsequent Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009.

The 2006 and 2007 Acts and the 2009 Regulations granted the Council the power to scrutinise both crime and disorder matters and hold the Dartford and Gravesham Community Safety Partnership (the CSP) and its partner organisations to account for their performance. This includes partnership work with the Council to meet specific local targets, as detailed in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Council and the CSP (Appendix C to the covering report).

In accordance with its Protocol, the Committee is required to review, scrutinise, and make reports and recommendations regarding, the functioning of the responsible authorities which comprise the Dartford and Gravesham CSP as listed below:

Dartford Borough Council

Gravesham Borough Council

Kent County Council

Kent Police

Kent Fire and Rescue Service

Kent Probation [formerly Kent, Surrey and Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company]

Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group

The Protocol also requires the Committee to report annually to the General Assembly of the Council (GAC) on the work it has undertaken in the preceding municipal year. This report provides a *summary* of the work undertaken by the Committee during the **2018-19** municipal year. Comprehensive details of the Committee's work in the period under review are contained in the Minutes of their meetings, as published in full on the Council's website.

APPENDIX A

The work carried out by the Crime & Disorder (Overview & Scrutiny) Committee compliments the work undertaken by the Scrutiny Committee and Policy Overview Committee, as defined by their separate Protocols, and set-out in their respective Work Plans, to avoid any duplication of Member and Officer effort.

CRIME & DISORDER (O&S) COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

In accordance with its Protocol, the Committee is required to consider on a **statutory** basis each year:

- The Dartford & Gravesham CSP's Strategic Assessment document;
- The CSP's projected three-year Community Safety Strategy or the annual Strategy Refresh document (as appropriate).

In addition, on a **discretionary** basis with the prior agreement of the CSP or the Council's Strategic Director (External Services) as appropriate; the Committee reviews on a rolling basis, the contributions made by individual partner agencies to the overall aims of the CSP; as set out in detail in the Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and the Partnership [Appendix C attached refers].

The Committee also considers stock agenda items. In the **2018-19** municipal year under review the Committee considered:

- The CSP's mid-year Performance Report;
- The published Minutes of the Kent & Medway Police & Crime Panel (PCP) meetings held in the period; and
- The annual update report from the Council's D-TAC (Dartford Town against Crime) team.

The Committee met twice during the **2018-19** municipal cycle on **25 July 2018** and **13 February 2019**.

At the initial meeting in the cycle Members agreed a rolling Work Plan for the Committee [set out in the table below] to be reviewed at subsequent meetings:

Rolling Work Plan 2018-19 and Beyond

Meeting	Work Plan Items		
Summer 2018 (July)	2018 Refresh to CSP Community Safety Strategy (2017-20) CSP Performance Report June 2018	D-TAC (Dartford Town Against Crime)) Annual Report PCP Update	Committee Annual Report 2017-18 Work Plan for 2018-19
Winter 2019 (February)	CSP Strategic Assessment 2018		Review Work Plan

APPENDIX A

Summer 2019 (July)	CSP Community Safety Strategy (2018 to 2021) 2019 Refresh	CSP Performance Report June 2019 D-TAC Annual Update	PCP Update Annual Report 2018-19 2019-20 Work Plan
Winter 2020 (February)	CSP Strategic Assessment 2019	PCP Update Review Work Plan	

Work Plan items considered by the Committee in the **2018-19** municipal cycle are summarised below for Members to note. Comprehensive details of the Committee's discussions in the period under review are contained in the relevant Minutes, as published in full on the Council website.

WORK PLAN ITEMS considered in the 2018-19 MUNICIPAL YEAR

Summer Meeting - 25 July 2018

Standing Invitations

The Committee renewed their standing invitation to the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Community Development, Councillor Mrs Ann Allen MBE, to attend and contribute to their meetings in the ensuing municipal cycle. The continued guidance provided by the Council's Strategic Director (External Services) to the Committee's proceedings was welcomed, and contributions from Council Officers and Kent Police representatives in the Council's joint Community Safety Unit to future agenda items noted.

Item 1: Kent Police and Crime Panel (PCP) – Update

Members were asked to note the published Minutes for the PCP meetings held on 8 February and 25 April 2018.

The Chairman had attended the latter meeting in his role as Dartford representative to the PCP, and highlighted the following points for the Committee:

- **999 and 101 Service** – to improve response times for both services, the Kent Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) had sanctioned the recruitment of 40 additional staff for the Forces Control Room to answer calls, plus a further 20 staff for the Incident Management Unit;

APPENDIX A

- **Public reporting of Crime** – online reporting of crime by the public had increased by 11% and public reporting of road traffic collisions had increased by 60%;
- **Policing of Road Traffic** – the Commissioner had put a case to central Government for Kent to be considered as a special case for extra funding from March 2019 to meet increased road policing demands post-Brexit;
- **Speedwatch** - Panel Members had fed-back positively regarding the speedwatch scheme including a noted improvement in their relationship with Kent Police;
- **Mental Health Update** - the Commissioner had welcomed the investment made by Kent's Chief Constable to increase the size of Kent Police's Mental Health Team. A further increase was proposed as part of the uplift of 200 additional police officers in 2018/19.

Members resolved to note the published Minutes of the PCP meetings held on 8 February and 25 April 2018 as included in the agenda papers, together with the Chairman's additional comments and background concerning the Panel meeting held on 25 April.

Item 2: Training Workshop for Dartford Hackney Cab & Private Hire Operators

The Council's Licensing Manager detailed for Members, the key elements of a new and unique '*workshop training day*' for new Hackney and Private Hire drivers and operators (and those renewing their licences) provided jointly by the Council's Licensing Team and Kent Fire & Rescue Service (KFRS).

The training had been held at the KFRS facility in Rochester and had utilised the Service's existing '*Road Safety Experience*' training module, dovetailed with mandatory training modules from the Council's Licensing Team, for Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE Safeguarding) and the 'Prevent' element of the Government's Counter Terrorism measures.

The day-long Workshop comprised two distinct sessions. In the morning the Council's Licensing Team had covered the mandatory training modules for 'Safeguarding', 'Prevent' and law and policy, in an interactive session with drivers to enable them to obtain the required 'credits' for their licence. The afternoon session from KFRS comprising a full Road Traffic Crash role play experience, tailored to meet the bespoke needs of the Taxi Driver audience. The final part of the day examined statistics for road traffic accidents, the consequences of those incidents, and how small changes in driving habits could make significant differences to the benefit of other road users. Taxi drivers were given the opportunity to ask questions of the Police, KFRS and Council Officers and gave positive feedback and evaluation on the training they had received.

Members welcomed the Council initiative with KFRS and noted the unique nature of the multi-agency training within Kent, and suggested that the Council might wish to consider advertising the 1 day workshop more widely in the local press, and via the Council's twitter feed and website.

APPENDIX A***Item 3: Dartford Town against Crime (DTAC) Scheme – Progress Report***

The Committee received a progress report on the DTAC Scheme from the Town Centre & Business Manager, supported by a PowerPoint presentation from the DTAC Intelligence Manager, which detailed the progress made by the Scheme in the year ending 31 March 2018.

The progress report and accompanying PowerPoint presentation covered the following principal areas of the Scheme:

- Performance of DTAC by way of reports/information;
- Crime statistics from Police.uk web-site;
- Shop-safe radios and Council CCTV;
- Policing of the Town;
- DTAC finances;
- New/Leaving DTAC members;
- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) / auditing of DTAC Disc

The DTAC Manager highlighted the following specific points within the above headings for Members:

- **Performance of DTAC via reports/information from DTAC Disc system** – reports from business members averaged 89 per month, business membership had peaked at 74 in August 2017 but dropped to 61 in June 2018 – a membership loss of 12%. Users with access rights to DTAC Disc data had also fallen from a peak of 116 in January 2018 to 99 in June 2018. A membership audit and the restrictions of the Government's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) post May 2018, were seen as principal causes for the drop. The average number of log-ins to disc had been 235 per month. The automatic DTAC Disc 'Alert' system which informed members of offences, crime methods and other matters of interest automatically, had averaged 4 alerts per month;
- **Reports of losses & recovery of goods to DTAC** –recorded losses had increased from £31.3K in 2016 to £55.7K in 2017 and were projected to reach £58.9K in 2018. However, similar increases had been recorded for recovered goods;
- **Crime statistics from the Police.uk web-site – Local & Most Similar Town Groups:** '*Shoplifting within 1 mile of Town Centre*' had remained constant with a seasonal 'spike' of 52 offences in December 2017 (the run-up to Christmas) preceded by a seasonal low of 22 in September 2017. Instances of '*ASB, Public Order offences & Criminal Damage*' had fluctuated. A peak had been reached in October and November (Halloween and Guy Fawkes's Bonfire night) preceded by lower figures in July to September. The offences of '*Violence against the Person, Robbery & Theft from Persons (Pickpocketing)*' had also fluctuated. Within Dartford's family of Most Similar Town Groups (MSTGs) and CSPs the Council had achieved varied results in the year ending December 2017. In terms of all crime recorded in the 15 most similar

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Towns/CSPs across England and Wales, Dartford's crime rate was second highest behind only Peterborough. For Shoplifting Dartford was 6th highest in the Group and 2nd highest for Violence against the Person. For Public Order offences Dartford was 4th highest within the Group;

- **Shop-Safe Radios & CCTV** – the expanded digital system was up and running with only minor technical issues concerning masts. The expansion of the DTAC radio system to Longfield had been agreed between the Parish and the Council and was 99% complete. Two more operators had been recruited for the Council's in-house CCTV operation to address some loss of coverage in the Town centre and the fall in DTAC membership;
- **Policing of the Town** – Dartford businesses were generally content with the level of policing in the Town from the dedicated Town Centre PC and PCSO;
- **DTAC Finances** - Business membership remained at £36 p.m. plus VAT with Charity shops paying £10 p.m. plus VAT, administered by the Council's Finance Department: combined with the Council's contribution this had given an annual income for the year of £31,000. Outward expenditure included; licence renewals of £250, the new mast and radio system for Longfield £4,000, the annual licence for the Disc system of £1200 and public liability insurance of £340. Capital revenue from membership fees had fallen, but new business membership and revenue was expected, once the new mast was erected in Longfield;
- **General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)** – The advent of GDPR [from May 2018] had required all DTAC members to re-sign revised confidentiality agreements, liaison with Kent Police's Data Protection Officer, and new DTAC policies to be written for approval of the Council's Head of Legal Services. An audit of the Disc system had also been undertaken to 'cleanse' it of all information more than 2 years old to further comply with GDPR.

Members resolved to note the report and expressed their appreciation of the current DTAC Scheme and its operation by the DTAC Manager.

Item 4: Review of Dartford's Safer Streets Policy

Members were informed by the District Commander that the review of Dartford's Safer Streets Policy by Kent Police remained ongoing, and had yet to reach the final report stage.

Current work by the Dartford CSU Inspector had focussed on existing police patrol patterns for the Town Centre over three consecutive week-ends. This had revealed that:

- The majority of anti-social activity stemming from the night-time economy in the Town Centre occurred after midnight;
- Reducing patrols pre-midnight could free between 4 to 6 Officers for other duties;

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- Increased use of Special Constables to police the night-time economy could produce further staff 'savings' for re-location to other duties
- Venues in the Town Centre operating as part of the night-time economy would be re-visited and re-appraised;
- Existing hot-spots would be re-evaluated;
- Liaison with British Transport Police would be increased to address the issue of criminals from London and elsewhere in Kent and Essex commuting to Dartford station to commit offences in the Borough.

The District Commander confirmed that Kent Police were fully aware of the potential impact on public confidence that withdrawing patrols from the Town Centre prior to midnight, at week-ends might have. Data from existing patrol patterns continued to be reviewed by Kent Police, and public opinion to any proposed changes gauged, utilising social media the Council's CSU twitter feed.

Kent Police and Council Officers would undertake a media campaign via the Police website and the CSU twitter feed, to ensure that the public were made aware of any new proposals before they instituted.

Item 5: Performance

The Committee considered the Dartford & Gravesham Community Safety Partnership's (CSP) Quarterly Performance Report (July 2018) in closed session, given the confidential nature of the source material it contained, as provided by individual CSP partner agencies.

The July 2018 Performance report (previously agreed by the CSP), detailed performance in relation to recorded levels of crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) in Dartford and Gravesham, as an indication of the CSP's current position within Kent as a whole. The report also highlighted key Community Safety activity that had been delivered in both Dartford and Gravesham since the CSP had last met, as a means of monitoring the Partnership's progress in addressing its strategic priorities.

Members were advised in a covering report from the Council's Community Safety Officer (CSO), that the format for the July 2018 Performance report differed from previous reports. National changes to crime data recording processes had been introduced in the interim, which meant that the data for recorded crimes in the July 2018 report, was *not* comparable to that for the corresponding period in the previous year. However, the new practices had *not* affected the recording of incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), and year-on-year comparison for that offence was still valid. It was hoped that year-on-year comparisons of all crime rates would be possible from 2019-20 onwards.

Members asked a variety of questions concerning specific aspects of the July 2018 Performance report, to which Officers gave the following responses:

- **CCTV** - a grant from the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) had enabled the Council to recruit an additional CCTV operator on a 1

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year fixed-term contract to increase surveillance in the Town Centre. A further grant request would be made to the PCC in 2019;

- **Gang prevention Measures** – bids to the PCC and the Home Office’s “*Trusted Relationship Fund*” (TRF) had secured funding in support of Gang intervention work. Gang members and their families being temporarily accommodated in Dartford by London Authorities, was an emerging issue. Dartford Council was not notified of such moves in advance. CSU Officers were working to establish better working relationships with neighbouring London Boroughs going forward;
- **Fly-Tipping Enforcement Campaign** – the Council had a new dedicated Enforcement Officer and the campaign was being run as a multi-agency operation with CSU support and Kent Police back-up.

Members resolved to note the Dartford & Gravesham Community Safety Partnership’s Performance Report (July 2018).

Item 6: 2018 Refresh to CSP’s Community Safety Strategy (2016-19)

Members considered the CSP’s Community Safety Strategy 2018 Refresh document which updated the CSP’s Community Safety Strategy (2016-19) document, initially considered by Members in February 2018.

The 2018 Refresh reflected the priorities identified in the CSP’s Strategic Assessment 2018 document, together with the views of partner Agencies and elected Members, as agreed by the CSP in March 2018

Members resolved to note the contents of the 2018 Refresh to the CSP’s Community Safety Strategy (2016-19).

Item 7: Work Plan 2018/19 – Update

Members agreed the contents of the revised rolling Work Plan for the remainder of the 2018-19 municipal year and the Summer and Winter meetings in the 2019-20 cycle as detailed in the Agenda, together with the following additions proposals by the Chairman and agreed by the SD (ES):

- Gangs
- Presentation from Kent Trading Standards

Item 8: Annual Report 2017-18

Members considered the contents of the Committee’s *draft* Annual Report for the preceding **2017-18** municipal cycle and resolved that it be submitted to the General Assembly of the Council for noting, and expressed their thanks to the Committee Co-ordinator for his support of the Committee throughout the preceding municipal year.

APPENDIX A**Winter Meeting - 13 February 2019*****Item 1: Kent Police and Crime Panel (PCP) Update***

Members were asked to note the published Minutes of the PCP meetings held on 19 July, 27 September and 14 November 2018.

In his role as Dartford representative, the Chairman had attended the most recent PCP meeting on 6 February 2019 and summarised the principal matters discussed for Members:

- **Police Precept** - the Panel had approved a proposal by the Kent Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) to raise the Police precept element in Council Tax. The increase would equate to £24 p.a. in the Council Tax for each Band D property, and help fund the recruitment of 180 new Kent Police Officers. Training and deployment of the new recruits would be subject to the overall operational control of the Chief Constable;
- **Crime Recording** - Kent Police had regained its 'Outstanding' status for the recording of crime following the 2018 inspection of the Force by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary;
- **Brexit** –Initial funding of £150K had been allocated to Kent to finance measures in the case of a 'No-Deal' Brexit post 29 March 2019.

Members resolved to note the published Minutes for the PCP meetings held on 19 July, 27 September and 14 November 2018 and the feed-back from the Chairman concerning the PCP proceedings held on 6 February 2019.

Item 2: Kent Trading Standards (KTS)

The Committee received a PowerPoint presentation from Kent County Council's Principal Trading Standards Officer.

Members were advised that Kent Trading Standard' operation had been rationalised and re-situated in Ashford. It comprised four re-structured teams:

- The Complex Investigations Team - dealing with rogue traders on an in-depth basis;
- The Food Chain Team;
- The Business Advice Services Team (Brexit had increased the Team's work-load considerably);
- The Consumer and Public Safety Team

The Principal Trading Standards Officer covered the following major KTS work areas in his presentation, with particular reference to the work priorities his own Consumer & Public Safety Team:

Brexit

This remained a major unknown for Trading Standards in terms of a final deal approved by Parliament or a 'no-deal' Brexit. Both scenarios would have a

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major impact on trading and business in the UK. In the event of a 'no-deal' Brexit a degree of contingency and even emergency planning would also be required. Either final scenario would entail:

- Increased work at all the Channel ports and dock operations;
- An increase in Trading Standards' support to businesses;
- The potential for criminals to exploit the continuing uncertainty over the final outcome and subsequently, particularly in the event of a 'no-deal' Brexit;
- Significant contingency planning to prevent fuel shortages post Brexit and gridlock on the motorway and road system. In particular access to and egress from the Channel ports.

Consumer and Public Safety Team: Work Areas

- The prevention of faulty goods reaching the domestic marketplace via intelligence led operations at docks and other points of UK entry, inspection of retail premises and product labelling, assisting companies in product re-call;
- To help combat underage sales of alcohol and tobacco via an holistic, intelligence led approach, with the Police, public and young people to identify and prosecute offending retailers;
- The prevention of illegal alcohol and tobacco sales [not overly prevalent in Kent to date] and the support of vaping sales as a healthier alternative;
- Combating knife crime via an Intel led approach against suspected retailers and the enforcement of the over 25 policy;
- Explosives monitoring, particularly fireworks and the possibility of bomb-making from such commonly sold products.

Illegal Tobacco

- Illegal tobacco could be recognised by its labelling, often in a Cyrillic script and absence of health warnings, and contained more impurities than legal brands. 'Mock Convenience Stores' were the principal outlet, concealing their principal illegal activity by selling a basic selection of consumer products. Genuine retail stores also sold illegal tobacco products, given the profit mark-up and as a means of attracting increased customer footfall for legal product sales. On-line and Facebooks traders dealing expressly in illegal tobacco products was a growing trend;
- Trading Standards targeted illegal tobacco sales because of the increased health risks the products posed particularly for minors, and the threat to overall Government health policy posed by these more affordable illegal products. The products also undermined local economies by removing revenue from legitimate businesses and passing it to organised criminal operations. The loss of tax revenue from illegal tobacco sales impacted on the Exchequer, and the Government's ability to fund its enforcement bodies;
- The 2018 survey of smokers in SE England had revealed that 70% bought illegal tobacco, with 75% doing so knowingly. Some 83% of smokers had a single illegal tobacco supplier so effective enforcement could changing their purchasing profile. Some 87% had agreed that all

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smokers bought illegal product at some time, and that cheaper illegal tobacco made it harder to quit smoking. If caught and prosecuted 70% of smokers surveyed would stop purchasing illegal products, 78% would stop if they thought their outlet was linked to criminal gangs, and 85% would stop buying illegal products if their outlet supplied to children;

- Approximately 20 shops of a criminal nature had been identified conducting illegal tobacco sales in Kent. However, successful prosecutions in the Courts were difficult to obtain, given the absence of any paper trail to establish ownership of the premises. Magistrates could impose significant fines against those convicted, but fines were insignificant in the context of the overall profit such illegal operations made;
- Alternative strategies to combat illegal tobacco sales included: Kent Police's Illegal Tobacco Unit Roadshow funded by Kent Public Health which visited Dartford in 2017], Primary and Secondary School theatre productions to warning against the dangers of smoking – particularly illegal products, Kent Police Open Day, spray-painting 'Smoke-Free Zone' signs in public places e.g. Young Mum's Centre in the Isle of Sheppey;
- Joined-up reporting across government agencies was important and helped demonstrate the 'nuisance' caused by 'Mock Convenience Stores' and the link that illegal tobacco [and alcohol] sales had to increased levels of anti-social behaviour (ASB). A sustained multi-agency approach was required to both disrupt supply networks and deter users.

Members thanked the Principal Trading Standards Officer for a comprehensive presentation and invited him to return and update the Committee.

Item3: Review of Dartford's Safer Streets Policy

Prior to receiving an update from Kent Police guests on Dartford's current Safer Streets policy, at the discretion of the Chairman, the Committee were addressed by a representative from Dartford's Nepalese community regarding their concern that organised criminal gangs committing burglary in the Borough were targeting Indian and Nepalese homes.

The Nepalese community representative informed Members that burglary offences in Dartford had risen consistently over the previous 6 year period, with the 100 plus families of Indian and Nepalese descent resident in Dartford appearing to suffer from this particular crime on a disproportionate basis.

He sought an increased Police presence in the town centre to combat this concerted rise in burglary offences, including more resources devoted to the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, and asked what measures his community association could adopt to help the Police to positively address the issue.

Members were advised by the District Commander that Kent Police were aware of the rise in burglary offences and had a Kent Control Strategy in place to combat it. A concerted 3-4 week operation was being undertaken by Kent Police in Dartford which had already produced arrests of key known criminals using Intel and CCTV footage. Dartford's CSU Police Inspector would continue to work with the local community and all residents and

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community groups and stood ready to attend any proposed meetings with them, to help educate residents over measures they could adopt to help the Police further combat burglary in their areas.

At the request of the District Commander, Members agreed to consider Kent Police's further refinements to Dartford's Safer Streets policy within the overall context of 'Offences of Violence', together with their consideration of the CSP's 2018 Strategic Assessment document, later in the agenda.

Item4: Kent and Medway Gangs Strategy and County Lines

Members received a joint presentation from Kent Police representatives and the Council's Community Safety Manager which addressed the following principal areas:

- National Picture
- Gangs
- Signs, Risks and Vulnerabilities
- Kent and Medway Strategy
- How Dartford is Responding

Spread of City Gangs and County Lines

So called 'County Lines' operations had spread out North, South, East and West from the Metropolis into the Home Counties, with the number of London Gangs believed to have reduced from 230 down to 180 with an overall gang membership of some 3,000 individuals. 'County Lines' activity appeared to operate across most of Kent. Dartford was *not* a 'hotspot' but had its issues.

Definition of a Gang

The Home Office (HO) definition of a gang was '*a group of 3 or more people involved in violence*' **and** had '*one or more characteristics that enabled its members to be identified by others*'. Kent Police had refined the HO definition further by recognising a distinction between:

- Organised criminal gangs associated with level 2 criminality [Kent, Surrey and Sussex];
- Gangs maintaining 'drug lines' across the county of Kent;
- Those who have a more nebulous link to gangs and a '*youth culture*' based on a '*tag line*' or postcode affiliation.

The activities of the second and third categories listed above in particular, exhibited a potent form of Child Criminal Exploitation.

Gang Structure

Gangs could be broken down into the following tiered structure:

- **Highest Tier** – the 'Elder' or 'Boss' who often owned their own business for laundering drugs and money with average daily turnover of £3K upwards;

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- **Middle Tier** – ‘Shotters’ or ‘Generals’ were the main enforcers in a gang, researched new areas for drug demand, organised recruitment, supervised the lower tier and crossed ‘county lines’ during their activities;
- **Lower Tier**- ‘Wrappers’ were back room staff who prepared Class A drugs for sale. ‘Youngers’ (including kids) carried knives and committed street robberies. New recruits entered the gang family at this level.

Safeguarding – National Issue

- The age of children dealing drugs in gangs was getting progressively younger, prompting education around gangs to be targeted at a younger audience and age-group;
- Youths, early school-age teenagers and even younger children were all easy targets for gang recruitment. Children from single parent families or with a parent who was a drug user were particularly susceptible, and attracted by the gang role model;
- Younger pre-Secondary school age children were increasingly recruited by gangs because they were harder to identify and re-educate.

Cuckooing

County Line drug dealing was the practice of metropolitan crime gangs supplying drugs outside London to dealers in the Home Counties. The term ‘*Cuckooing*’ described the practice whereby drug dealers took over the homes of vulnerable persons to use as a base for dealing. The practice represented a significant risk to both the ‘*cuckooed*’ individual and the wider community. Indicators of the practice included:

- Individuals taking over a vulnerable person’s address;
- Vulnerable people being threatened or coerced into co-operating;
- Frequent high numbers of visitors to the address;
- Signs of drug misuse at the address including deal bags and weighing scales;
- Individuals displaying large amounts of cash and having multiple mobile phones.

People in the social housing market were particularly vulnerable to this gang activity, and the Council’s Housing Department liaised closely with the Community Safety Unit and Kent Police to prevent ‘*Cuckooing*’ operations in the Borough.

Kent and Medway Gangs Strategy 2018-2021 - *Approach to Ending the Criminal Exploitation of Vulnerable Children and Adults by Gangs*

Vision

- To protect and prevent young people from becoming involved with gangs, to tackle gang-related harm and youth violence, to pursue effective enforcement action to deal with those embroiled in gang activities; through collaborative working across Kent & Medway local agency partnerships, to achieve the key objectives that have been identified as central to driving this vision.

APPENDIX A**Action Plan – District Involvement**

- Multi-agency ‘problem profiling’ of gangs and nominal gang associates operating in Kent & Medway;
- To obtain a more comprehensive and sophisticated understanding of where and how gangs operated in the County, in order to better target resources and channel collective energies to tackle this issue for both vulnerable children and adults, drawing on the Margate Taskforce geo-mapping and peer group analysis approach;
- To provide individuals and their families at risk of gang involvement, with focussed support and wrap-around services to dissuade them from entering into gangs and criminal groups;
- To Work across the tiers of local government to use all available powers to create and manage public spaces and discourage gang congregation.

Members were advised that Dartford was *not* a ‘trail-blazer’ in terms of County Line activity in Kent. Thanet (Margate) had been the first major location for such activity in the county with lessons to be learnt from that local authority’s experience, and how it had addressed the issue with early help from and liaison with, London Boroughs and the Kent and Metropolitan Police Forces.

In addition to drawing on KCC’s Safeguarding policy, Dartford worked closely with Kent Police and held a seat on KCC’s Serious Youth Crime Reduction Group, currently occupied by Councillor Ann Allen MBE, as a Kent Member and Dartford Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Community Development.

Dartford contribution to Objectives of Kent & Medway Plan**Prepare**

- Manage public spaces to discourage gang congregation and associated anti-social behaviour (ASB) using Dartford’s CCTV operation, enhanced with funding from the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner; expansion of the Council’s DTAC (Dartford Town Against Crime) Scheme;
- Create a shared understanding of gangs across the agencies of the Dartford & Gravesham Community Safety Partnership, develop a common language and approach to gang work via the Dartford Serious Youth Violence Group, continued staff training in the field.

Pursue

- Effective enforcement and offender management to deal with gang members who refuse to reform, enforcement of the Night-Time economy, use of the Housing Act, Community Protection procedures and Policing Operations and Initiatives.

Prevent

- Strengthen early intervention and prevention work to stop young people becoming involved with gangs through improvements in information sharing, Police input into schools, working with the St. Giles Trust and

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NatWest as a 'community banker', Head Teacher education, Youth Hubs, Kent Serious Youth Violence Crime scheme, and the Kent Police Dartford Youth Engagement Officer.

Protect

- Develop support pathways to help young people out of gangs and violent behaviour including: the Challenge scheme, attendance at Adolescent Risk Management Panel (ARM) and Integrated Offender Management (IOM) meetings, via the Vulnerability Forum multi-agency operation co-ordinated via the Kent Police CSU Inspector, via the CSO attending London Borough meetings, increased Cross-Border Liaison with Metropolitan Boroughs.

The CSM confirmed the following additional points in response to questions from Members:

- The Vulnerability Forum had no matrix of activity in Dartford, or profile of gang members, but work was being undertaken by reformed gang members to provide current offenders with positive male role models;
- Cuckooing was *not* prevalent in Dartford;
- The CSO was liaising with London authorities over their gang profiles and the nature of their County Line operations including any implications for Dartford.

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Community Development advised Members that the Local Children's Partnership Board was undertaking excellent work in Dartford. Dartford's Youth Council was also undertaking a vital and effective role in getting young people to talk to each other and she paid particular praise to the work being undertaken by the CSU and Kent Police to educate young people to the dangers of gang activity and involvement.

The Chairman and Members thanked the CSM for an excellent presentation and his positive responses to their questions, and noted the excellent work being undertaken by the CSO.

Item 5: Dartford and Gravesham Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment 2018

In accordance with the Committee's Terms of Reference, and as an Overview function on an annual basis, Members were asked to consider the Dartford and Gravesham Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Strategic Assessment 2018 document.

Members were reminded that the Strategic Assessment (SA) process was conducted annually by the CSP to address crime and anti-social behaviour issues impacting on its communities. The views of residents concerning those issues also formed part of the Strategic Assessment process. The 2018 SA exercise was particularly significant, as it formed the first stage of the CSP's new three-year Community Safety Strategy, to guide the Partnership's work between April 2019 and March 2022.

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The Community Safety Manager (CSM) drew Members attention to the following detailed points in the 2018 SA document

Total Crime 1 October 2017 to 30 September 2018

- **Total Crime** in Dartford for the period under review was 13,310 offences amounting to 123.4 offences per 1,000 of the population, slightly higher than the Kent-wide average of 107.7 offences;
- **Violent Crime** in Dartford had also increased and was above the Kent average. Changes to national crime recording practices accounted for part of the increase, but it was nevertheless a concern for the CSP. He advised that only 50% of crimes categorised as violent resulted in actual injury to a person;
- **Domestic Abuse (DA)** cases had risen sharply in the year under review, again due in part to changes in recording practices, whereby each historic offense disclosed by a victim involving the same perpetrator, was now recorded as a separate crime. Funding from the Home Office Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Transformation Fund, to deliver the '*Altogether Safer Project*' across the Dartford and Gravesham CSP had been increased by £19K in 2018 to extend the '*Out of Hours*' Service and strengthen '*Choose Respect*' work;
- **Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)** had seen a significant reduction in Dartford of 26.7%, greater than elsewhere in Kent. A drop in the number of repeat offenders was seen as particularly positive. There had also been a significant drop in deliberate fires (arson) in Dartford;
- **Reducing Offending and Reoffending:** the focus within this priority was the disruption of serious and organised crime and preventing and reducing Youth reoffending (with an emphasis on gang-related activity). The CSP would draw-up a 3 year plan to address the issue, but funding would be key to its success.

Members were then addressed by the District Commander on the recent spike in burglaries in Dartford, which had been subjected to increased Police activity, including an element to address burglaries in the Nepalese and Indian community. Police contact with the Sikh Temple and community in Dartford was also being strengthened. Those exercises had been dovetailed with his continued review of Dartford's Safer Streets policy. The Review had shown that Kent Police had good intelligence and a strategy in place to react to any future spikes of anti-social behaviour in the Night-Time economy.

Members were advised that the recruitment and training of new Police constables was underway following the increased funding to the Police precept element of Council Tax, approved by the Kent Police and Crime Panel in February 2019. Police numbers would increase on the ground in Dartford following training. The key nature of the combined Police and Council operation in Dartford CSU was highlighted to Members. Also the effective inter-face with Bexley, Greenwich and Lewisham Councils, and best practice shared with Gravesham CSU and other partners within the CSP.

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The CSM concluded the presentation to Members with details of the CSP priority for '*Protecting Vulnerable People and Strengthening Communities*'. Mental health issues, homelessness and vulnerable adults were key issues which demanded effective co-operation and co-ordination across all agencies in the Partnership, to help the individuals concerned and to strengthen the Dartford and Gravesham communities as a consequence.

He confirmed that the next step was for the priorities from the 2018 SA to be subject to a public survey, prior to their incorporation into the Partnership's 2019-2022 Community Safety Strategy and 2019 Action Plan.

Members resolved to note the CSP's Strategic Assessment 2018 document, and the CSP's intention to submit a new Community Safety Strategy (2019-2022) document to address the priorities identified in the Strategic Assessment 2018 to the next meeting of the Committee on 24 July 2019.

Item 6: Work Plan Update 2018-19 and Beyond

Members agreed the contents and timeframe for an updated Committee Work Plan for the remainder of the 2018-19 municipal year.

APPENDIX B**CRIME AND DISORDER (OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY) COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

[REPORTING TO COUNCIL unless otherwise stated in these Terms of Reference]

Chairman: Councillor C S McLean
Vice-Chairman: Councillor A S Sandhu MBE
Membership: Councillors D J Mote, B Garden, A Gaskin, K J Grehan, P M Harman and T Oliver.

**TERMS OF REFERENCE:
DELEGATED FUNCTIONS:****General Provisions**

'Crime and disorder' is defined as including forms of crime and disorder that involve anti-social behaviour or other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment or the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances.

1. To review and scrutinise the discharge of the crime and disorder functions of the responsible authorities (local authorities, fire and rescue authorities, police authorities, the police, primary care trusts) which comprise the Dartford and Gravesham Community Safety Partnership (the CSP), as set out in these Terms of Reference.
2. To review and scrutinise the discharge of any other local crime and disorder matter related to the Council's crime and disorder functions.
3. To make reports or recommendations as appropriate, to the GAC, Cabinet, the CSP or any one or more responsible authority etc.
4. To review responses from and monitor the action (if any), taken by the CSP, an individual responsible authority, Officers, GAC, Cabinet etc.

Overview Functions

5. No less than once in every twelve month period, to review strategies in connection with the discharge by the CSP of its crime and disorder functions and make reports or recommendations in accordance with para. 3 above.

Scrutiny Functions

6. No less than once in every twelve month period, to scrutinise decisions made, or action taken, by the CSP and the Council of its crime and disorder functions and make reports or recommendations in accordance with para. 3 above.
7. To consider any local crime and disorder matter referred to the Committee by a local ward Member under the Councillor Call for Action provisions referred to in the Committee's Protocol.

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MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE CRIME AND DISORDER (OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY) COMMITTEE AND THE DARTFORD AND GRAVESHAM COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

Introduction

1. The Council has a legal duty under Section 17(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to carry out all its various functions with regard to the need to prevent crime and disorder and reduce re-offending in its area.
2. The Police and Justice Act 2006 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 grant the Council the power to scrutinise both crime and disorder matters through the Dartford and Gravesham Community Safety Partnership (the CSP). The legislative powers are intended to enable the Council's overview and scrutiny function to hold the CSP and other partner organisations to account for their performance, including their work with the Council, to meet specific local targets.
3. The Councillor Calls for Action provide a 'last resort' mechanism for the Council's overview and scrutiny function to try to resolve persistent local crime and disorder issues of genuine community concern, where all efforts by a local ward Councillor to find a solution through local action and discussion with the CSP etc, have been unsuccessful.
4. In order for the exercise of overview and scrutiny powers to be effective, it is vital that the CSP and other partners and stakeholders are engaged in the process and share a common understanding of the Council's overview and scrutiny aims. This Memorandum of Understanding has therefore been developed to embody that understanding and sets out the rights and responsibilities that relate to the parties concerned.

The CSP and main tasks

- 5.(a) The CSP comprises seven statutory bodies who have a legal duty to work with other local agencies and organisations to develop and implement strategies to tackle crime and disorder, including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment, as well as the misuse of drugs in their area:

Dartford Borough Council
 Gravesham Borough Council
 Kent Police
 Kent County Council
 Kent Fire and Rescue Service
 Kent Surrey and Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company
 Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group

- (b) The CSP works with numerous other agencies and voluntary groups.
- (c) In order to identify and deliver on the priorities that matter the most to local communities, the CSP is required to carry out a number of main tasks:
 - preparing an annual strategic assessment which identifies the crime and community safety priorities in the area, through analysis of information provided by partner agencies and the community;
 - producing a partnership plan, detailing the approach for addressing priorities;
 - undertaking community consultation and engagement on crime and disorder issues; and
 - sharing information among the responsible authorities.

Aims of overview and scrutiny

6.To:

- (a) involve the responsible authorities, local people and community organisations, in overview and scrutiny activity;
- (b) develop a dialogue with the responsible authorities, service providers and other stakeholders external to the Council;
- (c) take up issues of concern to local people;
- (d) review whether the CSP's goals are being achieved; and
- (e) examine what can be done to solve problems and enhance the CSP's performance and achievement.

Designated crime and disorder committee

7.The Council's designated crime and disorder committee under section 19(1) of the Police and Justice Act 2006, is the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee. The Committee is independent of the CSP.

8.There will be at least one ordinary meeting of the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee in each municipal year in accordance with the Council's calendar of meetings. In addition, extraordinary meetings may be called as and when appropriate in accordance with the Council's Procedure Rules detailed in its Standing Orders.

9.The Committee's Terms of Reference

The overview and scrutiny of:

- (a) decisions and/or actions of the CSP and its partners, but only in so far as they relate to crime and disorder;
- (b) the CSP's annual strategic assessment;
- (c) the CSP's partnership plan;
- (d) community safety related local improvement targets measured through Local Area Agreements, Comprehensive Area Assessment and the Place Based Survey;
- (e) any other local crime and disorder matter related to the Council's/Cabinet's crime and disorder/community safety functions; and
- (f) the scrutiny of Councillor Calls for Action (on crime and disorder/community safety matters).

Management of the Council's crime and disorder/community safety functions

10. The Council's Strategic Director is responsible for the management of the Council's crime and disorder/community safety functions.

Council representatives on the CSP

11. The Leader of the Council and Managing Director are the Council's nominated representatives on the CSP.

CSP, responsible authorities named link officers and representatives

12. The CSP, individual responsible authorities will assign a named link officer to liaise with the Council's Member Services [refer to section 31 of this Memorandum of Understanding], to ensure that communication is swift and effective and that requests for information, responses to reports and/or recommendations and requests for CSP and responsible authorities' representatives to attend meetings, are dealt with, within the timescales referred to in the Committee's Protocol at Appendix A. Contact details of the named link officers will be notified to the Council's Member Services.

13. If summoned to attend meetings of the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee, the CSP's representative will be its Chairman or Vice-Chairman.
14. If summoned to attend meetings of the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee, the nomination/appointment by the responsible authorities of representatives and substitutes as participants in the overview and scrutiny process, will be at the discretion of their governing bodies or as detailed in their constitutions.

Underlying principles of crime and disorder overview and scrutiny

15. The following underlying principles of overview and scrutiny will assist in securing effective outcomes and adding value:

(a) Collaboration

- community safety and freedom from crime and disorder for the people of the Borough of Dartford is dependant upon many factors, including the services provided in partnership by/with the CSP. The CSP will work in partnership with the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee to provide objective and effective scrutiny of crime and disorder in the Borough of Dartford. This shared responsibility should be acknowledged in any crime and disorder overview and scrutiny activity undertaken;
- increasingly, services are provided jointly or as a result of partnerships between the Council and other public sector organisations or other parties. Overview and scrutiny activities should therefore also reflect shared priorities, find shared solutions and be of mutual benefit;
- while overview and scrutiny should be constructive and challenging, it will only be successful if all partners work together considerately, within a climate of mutual respect, trust and good faith with an understanding and commitment to the CSP's and Council's crime and disorder aims and objectives.

(b) Added Value

- it is vital that overview and scrutiny brings something new to reviews/scrutiny of crime and disorder functions and does not duplicate the many other forms of performance management and inspection that exist for public service providers.
- overview and scrutiny activities should make a distinct and positive impact and only be carried out where objective scrutiny/review by elected Councillors, will help progress to be made.
- overview and scrutiny activities should have a clear purpose. There should be a focus on crime reduction and improving the well-being of those who live and work in the Borough of Dartford.
- the overview and scrutiny process should be proactive in seeking out issues to examine, that will add most value.
- overview and scrutiny should be prepared to examine crime and disorder issues that cross service or agency boundaries and make appropriate recommendations to tackle such issues, whilst being mindful of potential implications for/on the CSP and/or other external organisations.
- overview and scrutiny should aim to develop feasible recommendations which provide value for money by securing benefits that outweigh the cost of implementation.
- overview and scrutiny will be focused on improving services and service provision for the people of the Borough of Dartford and will concentrate on outputs that are intended to help improve community safety and reduce the fear of crime in the Borough.

(c) Clarity

Overview and scrutiny of the CSP's crime and disorder functions:

- should be a transparent process which encourages open and honest discussion;
- should be well planned and timely;
- should be of particular issues and time-limited;
- should focus on strategic priorities and concerns, with a strategic view of performance usually aligned to key performance targets.

(d) Knowledge

- overview and scrutiny reports must be evidence-based in order to provide credible conclusions and recommendations;
- although the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee will want to be informed, the overview and scrutiny process is not an 'expert' review/scrutiny of the CSP's crime and disorder function;
- the overview and scrutiny process should be impartial, in that it should be driven by the evidence, rather than by a particular standpoint.

(e) Accessibility

- it is a fundamental role of the overview and scrutiny process to ensure that there is full and equal access to the democratic process, through public involvement and engagement;
- the views and ideas of service users (and non-users), service providers and organisations and other agencies with an interest in the subject under review/scrutiny, are all valuable in effective scrutiny – overview and scrutiny should involve all stakeholders and take account of views of service users and the public, with particular efforts to engage groups that are harder to reach;
- constructive engagement and clear lines of communication should enable a two-way flow of information between crime and disorder overview and scrutiny and all those involved, including feedback of results.

Providing information to the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee

16. The CSP, responsible authorities and the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee, will respect the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. The provision of information to/for overview and scrutiny will be governed by relevant legislation and established protocols for the sharing of data.
17. To facilitate the overview and scrutiny process and in accordance with reg.4 of the Local Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees)(England) Regulations 2012, requested information will be pro-actively provided by the CSP and responsible authorities (acting individually or collectively).

Notice of required attendance at committee meetings

18. Forward planning of the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee's annual work programme will normally ensure the provision of reasonable notice of requests for information/the submission of written reports and/or required attendance at Committee meetings, of representatives of the responsible authorities.
19. The CSP and responsible authorities will be informed in advance by the Council's Member Services, of overview and scrutiny exercises (including their scope).



20. Dates and times of meetings of the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee, agendas, minutes and reports, will be circulated by the Council's Member Services, to the named link officer of the CSP and the responsible authorities.
21. Subject to 14 clear days' notice (i.e. 14 periods of 24 hours running from midnight to midnight excluding bank and public holidays and the day on which the meeting is held) and information being provided as to the nature and scope of the overview and scrutiny, representatives of the CSP and the responsible authorities and/or other organisations working with the CSP, may be invited under Section 21(13)(b) of the Local Government Act 2000 to attend the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee meetings, to give evidence and/or answer questions.
22. Representatives of the CSP and the responsible authorities and/or other organisations working with the CSP should be willing to engage constructively with overview and scrutiny and attend meetings when invited.

Access to information

23. Reports which are presented to the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee, will be published on the Council's website www.dartford.gov.uk and circulated to the CSP and the responsible authorities' named link officers, 5 clear days before the Committee meeting.

Style and conduct of committee meetings

24. Meetings of the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee will be conducted in accordance with the principles and procedures set out in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules and Access to information Procedure Rules of the Council's Standing Orders and in accordance with the Committee's Protocol at Appendix A.

Reports and recommendations of the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee

25. The CSP and responsible authorities and co-ordinating body may be required by the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee to have regard to the Committee's Overview or Scrutiny Report and/or recommendations (Section 9FF(2) of the Local Government Act 2000).

Monitoring recommendations

26. Agreed actions will form the basis against which performance of the CSP and responsible authorities will be measured by the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee.

Local improvement targets

27. The Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee may scrutinise performance and delivery of the Kent County Council's KA2 – LAA crime and disorder/community safety local improvement targets.



Councillor Calls for Action

28. The CSP and responsible authorities (either collectively or individually) will co-operate on matters related to Councillor Calls for Action.

Resolving disputes about this Memorandum of Understanding

29. If the CSP and responsible authorities (acting collectively or individually) believe that this Memorandum of Understanding is not being adhered to, the issue should be referred to the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee for consideration and decision. The Committee's decision will be final.

Review of this Memorandum of Understanding

30. This Memorandum of Understanding will be reviewed jointly, on an annual basis or more frequently, if experience and circumstances highlight that amendments may need to be made.

Complaints against the CSP

31. Complaints against the CSP will be dealt with under the CSP's complaints procedure. Complaints relating to CSP activities submitted to the CSP against individual responsible authorities will be dealt with by the individual responsible authorities under their respective complaints procedure. The response to the complaint will be copied to the chairman of the CSP.

Availability of support

32. Further advice or information on any aspect of this Memorandum of Understanding or on overview and scrutiny at Dartford Borough Council, is available from Member Services by emailing memberservices@dartford.gov.uk or telephoning the Member Services Manager on 01322 343430.

DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

MINUTES of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday 25 July 2019 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor J A Kite, MBE (Chairman)
Councillor C J Shippam (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Mrs A D Allen, MBE
Councillor S H Brown
Councillor A R Lloyd
Councillor R J Wells

11. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Mrs P A Thurlow.

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interests.

13. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING HELD ON 13 JUNE 2019

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 13 June 2019 be confirmed as an accurate record.

14. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

15. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CABINET ADVISORY PANEL HELD ON 22 JULY 2019

The Cabinet received the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet Advisory Panel A on 22 July 2019 and had regard to the Panel's views throughout the meeting.

16. REFERENCES FROM COMMITTEES

There were no references from other committees.

17. DRAFT HOUSING ALLOCATIONS' POLICY - JULY 2019

The Cabinet considered a report which detailed the outcome of the latest review of the Housing Allocations' Policy which had been originally adopted by the Council on 18th March 2013 as the Council's framework for the allocation and management of the future allocation of properties. All housing authorities were required to have a Housing Allocations' Policy setting out how social housing properties would be allocated to eligible applicants in housing need. The policy had subsequently been reviewed in 2014 and 2018.

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In order to ensure a consistent approach a further review of the policy had been undertaken and amendments made, where appropriate, to reflect operational changes (including working practices) following the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, and the new policy met the requirements of current legislation. The report detailed the proposed changes to the Housing Allocations’ Policy and the general layout had also been revised to ensure ease of understanding, clarity and transparency.

The Cabinet had regard to the comments made by the Cabinet Advisory Panel, which had endorsed the recommendations contained in the report. The Chairman was advised that the Shadow Leader of the Council had taken up the invitation issued by the Housing Solutions and Private Sector Manager at the CAP meeting to be fully briefed on aspects of the policy. The Chairman was delighted to hear that the Shadow Leader had taken up an invitation that had been made on several occasions to his predecessor. His fresh approach was welcomed.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet agree the amendments to the Housing Allocations’ Policy as set out in the body of the report and approve the revised Policy, attached at Appendix A to the report.

18. DRAFT HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2019-2023

The Cabinet considered a report which detailed changes to the existing Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023 and the proposed Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2023. The Housing Act 1996 and the Homeless Reduction Act 2017 placed a duty on local housing authorities to provide advice and assistance to homeless people and people threatened with homelessness in their areas. In order to ensure that a strategic approach was taken towards the Council’s delivery of homelessness advice and assistance by the Housing Solutions Team the Housing Service carries out a review of homelessness and produces a Homelessness Strategy every five years as required under the Homelessness Act 2002. However in 2018 the Government announced new measures for tackling rough sleeping nationwide and that local authorities must prepare and publish a strategy in their area by December 2019, with a view to eliminating rough sleeping by 2027 and reducing it by half within the next couple of years. The existing strategy had therefore been updated to comply with the new legislation and changes in operational measures to meet the statutory requirement to publish a strategy for tackling rough sleeping. Although rough sleeping in the Borough was comparatively low, there were estimated to be 12 people sleeping rough at the time of the last rough sleeper count in 2018, it was recognised that rough sleeping could have a distressing and detrimental impact on people. The Council’s aim was to reduce the levels of rough sleeping in the borough as far as possible and steps were taken to ensure that those individuals identified at the last rough sleeper count that could be helped would not be sleeping rough by the time of the next count. The Strategy sought to ‘proactively prevent homelessness and rough sleeping through strong partnership working, and to provide an inclusive and accessible service to all’.

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The proposed Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2023 detailed the list of achievements from actions referred to in the previous Strategy and set out new actions to be delivered up to 2021. Progress would continue to be monitored by the multi-agency Dartford Homeless Strategy and Rough Sleeper Implementation Group (HSIG) formed under the last Strategy with the continuing aim that partner organisations should come together to drive implementation of the new Strategy for 2019-2023.

The Cabinet had regard to the comments made by the Cabinet Advisory Panel, which had endorsed the recommendations contained in the report.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet approve the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2019-2023, attached at Appendix A to the report.

19. ANNUAL TREASURY REPORT 2018/2019

The Cabinet considered a report which provided details of the outturn position (subject to audit) of the Council's investments and borrowing for the 2018/2019 financial year and which detailed the outturn position of the Council's treasury indicators.

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance commented on the high quality work carried out by the Finance Department on treasury management which had allowed £30M of the £87M debt taken on in 2012 as a result of the Housing Self Financing regime to be repaid already. He asked whether he could be given more notice of the dates for future meetings of the Treasury Management Panel given that these were daytime meetings and asked whether there was any training that could be provided for Members of the Panel in view of the complexity of the matters considered by the Panel. The Managing Director advised that more notice would be given of the dates for future meetings but that these could change. In terms of training, this had been commissioned previously but had proved to be expensive and unproductive as the subject matter was very specialised. Time was now being set aside at each Panel meeting to consider a specific area of work and to build the Panel's knowledge base. The Managing Director also explained the checks and balances built into the Council's treasury management practices and the role of Arlingclose in providing outside expertise and challenge. Clarification was also provided on why some of the Council's non-treasury investments did not generate income.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Cabinet notes the outturn for the Council's treasury management operations for 2018/19; and
2. That the Cabinet notes the outturn for the Council's treasury indicators.

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20. WRITE-OFF OF NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES

The Cabinet considered a report which proposed writing-off National Non-Domestic Rate debts, amounting to £1,108,229.03, where it had not been possible to obtain payment because of insolvency, because it was not possible to trace the ratepayer or where the debt was otherwise irrecoverable.

RESOLVED:

That the sums shown in exempt Appendix A in the confidential part of the report, amounting to £1,108,229.03, be written-off as uncollectable.

21. WRITE-OFF OF COUNCIL TAX

The Cabinet considered a report which proposed writing-off Council Tax, amounting to £14,468.64, where it had not been possible to obtain payment because the taxpayer could not be traced or the debt was otherwise irrecoverable.

The Cabinet Member for Finance said that he used to receive regular reports from the Revenues and Benefits service on the rates of Council Tax arrears but had not received these for some time. It was confirmed that these reports were still produced and that they would be sent to him in future.

RESOLVED:

That the sums shown in Exempt Appendix A to the report, in the closed part of the agenda, amounting to £14,468.64, be written off as uncollectable.

22. HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENT WRITE-OFFS

The Cabinet considered a report which proposed writing-off Housing Benefit overpayments, amounting to £39,792.31, where recovery was prohibited, not considered appropriate or where the customer had absconded.

RESOLVED:

That the sum of £39,792.31, shown in Exempt Appendix A to the report, on the closed part of the agenda, be written-off as irrecoverable.

23. CAPITAL PROGRAMME INCLUDING PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS - OUTTURN 2018/19

The Cabinet considered a report which provided details of the final pre-audit figures for the 2018/19 Capital Programme, the capital resources that were used to fund it and those resources that remain available to fund future investment.

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet note the draft outturn for the Capital Programme for 2018/19.

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2. That Cabinet note the draft outturn position for 2018/19 on Capital resources, and the balance available to be carried forward into 2019/20.
3. That the Cabinet recommend the total capital budget carried forward into 2019/20, as set out in Appendix C to the General Assembly of the Council.
4. That Cabinet note the outturn position on the Capital Prudential Indicators as shown in Appendix D.
5. That Cabinet agree a virement of 2019/20 budget from the new homes budget to the projects listed in Appendix C
6. That the General Assembly of the Council be asked to agree the capital budget carried forward into 2019/20 as per Appendix C, thereby increasing the total capital budget to £30.771m

24. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING - OUTTURN 2018/19

The Cabinet considered a report which provided details of the final pre-audit 2018/19 figures for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account, including reasons for significant variances compared to the probable outturn.

RESOLVED:

That the 2018/19 outturn for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account, together with the reasons for significant variances compared to probable outturn, be noted.

25. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2019/20

The Cabinet considered a report which updated Members on financial performance against the 2019/20 budget to date for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account.

The Cabinet had regard to the comments made by the Cabinet Advisory Panel, which had endorsed the recommendations contained in the report. The Chairman noted that a comprehensive response had been given to the CAP regarding the composition of the staff vacancy saving and in detailing the Council's programme of activities directed towards staff wellbeing, including stress management training. He noted the comment about budgeting for special events but felt that the budgetary approach taken was correct, budgets were kept under regular review and it was important to set challenging targets for income generation.

RESOLVED:

That Members note the monitoring report update for the year to date.

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26. CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING 2019/20

The Cabinet considered a report which detailed progress to date on the schemes in the approved Capital Programme for 2019/20 and reported the latest position on capital resources. The Chairman said that it was good that Dartford was able to sustain a healthy programme of capital projects which were outward facing and transformational and noted the good progress being made with works in the Town Centre, and at Acacia Hall and Stone Lodge.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet note the progress made to date on the 2019/20 Capital Programme.

27. WRITE-OFF OF NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES - EXEMPT APPENDIX A - EXEMPT CATEGORY SO46(1)(B)

RESOLVED:

That, following consideration of the main report (minute 20), Exempt Appendix A to the report be noted.

28. WRITE-OFF OF COUNCIL TAX - EXEMPT APPENDIX A - EXEMPT CATEGORY S)46(1)(B)

RESOLVED:

That, following consideration of the main report (minute 21), Exempt Appendix A to the report be noted.

29. WRITE-OFF OF HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENTS - EXEMPT APPENDIX A - EXEMPT CATEGORY SO46(1)(B)

RESOLVED:

That, following consideration of the main report (minute 22), Exempt Appendix A to the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.30 pm

Councillor J A Kite, MBE
CHAIRMAN

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DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

MINUTES of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday 5 September 2019 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor J A Kite, MBE (Chairman)
Councillor C J Shippam (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Mrs A D Allen, MBE
Councillor S H Brown
Councillor A R Lloyd
Councillor Mrs P A Thurlow
Councillor R J Wells

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor D J Mote

30. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interests.

32. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25 JULY 2019

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 25 July 2019 be confirmed as an accurate record.

33. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

34. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CABINET ADVISORY PANEL HELD ON 2 SEPTEMBER 2019

The Cabinet received the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet Advisory Panel B held on 2 September 2019 and had regard to the Panel's views throughout the meeting.

35. REFERENCES FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

There were no references from other committees.

36. FUTURE HIGH STREETS FUND BID

The Cabinet considered a report detailing progress with the Council's bid for funding from the Future High Streets Fund in respect of the Co-Op

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development scheme and setting out the next stages in the bid process. The Council's initial 'Expression of Interest' had been selected to go forward to the next assessment stage which would involve producing a full business case for submission to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government in November 2019 (MHCLG).

The Chairman stressed that this scheme was an important part of plans to reinvigorate the High Street which also reflected the changing nature and mix of offerings needed to have a vibrant High Street. He said that the Council was a key player in taking this forward and that it was right for the Council to invest in the future of the scheme.

The Strategic Director (Internal Services) explained that the MHCLG was looking for schemes that were 'shovel ready' and could progress quickly and to be considered as 'shovel ready', the scheme would need to have planning permission in place. In order to progress the Co-Op project so that it could form a central part of the Council's bid, the developer for this project now needed to submit a planning application. In normal circumstances the developer would wait until any viability issues with the scheme had been identified and addressed before submitting a planning application. Given the timescales involved this would not be possible and in order to submit an application the developer was therefore looking for the Council to underwrite the costs of moving the scheme to the planning stage to the sum of £1.4m to mitigate the developer's risk in the event that the scheme was unable to proceed.

The Chairman explained that the Council would be an important stakeholder and that it was proper for the Council to have 'skin in the game'. He felt that a potential contribution of £1.4M in order to progress a scheme that was likely to involve a much greater total investment was reasonable in order to move the project forward. He noted that some Members of the Cabinet Advisory Panel had expressed concern that the Council was being asked to provide a guarantee to underwrite the developer's costs, and ultimately their profits, to the tune of £1.4M when there was no certainty that the Council's bid for Central Government funding would be successful. However the Cabinet Advisory Panel had welcomed the regeneration opportunities arising from the development and strongly supported the bid and endorsed the recommendations contained in the report. It was however suggested that the Cabinet might wish to caveat the underwriting of the developers costs to install a timeframe, or backstop, to the period during which it was prepared to underwrite these costs as well as capping the amount at £1.4M. Cabinet felt that, given that the amount was capped at £1.4M and that any further expenditure would require further Cabinet approval, it was unnecessary to install a backstop.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Advisory Panel for its comments and support and examined the various elements of the scheme and their readiness to progress and felt that the scheme stood a strong chance of moving forward. He noted that plans for a new health hub in Kent, similar to that proposed as part of the Co-Op scheme were at a similar stage of progression and that funding decisions on both were likely to be made next

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Spring. Members welcomed the proposed scheme and the need for regeneration of the site and noted the good progress of other development works in the town centre. The Chairman stressed that this was only the first phase of proposed works for the High Street and outlined his vision for creating a welcoming, but compressed, High Street which reflected modern needs and expectations whilst retaining an old fashioned feel.

A Member asked what would happen if the scheme ultimately became unviable for the current developer and what the Council would get in return if it had to make payment to the developer. The Strategic Director (Internal Services) explained that the Council would explore other funding options and look to work with other partners and that, by that stage, there would be far more information available as a result of technical evaluations having been carried out and detailed plans would have taken shape and could inform future decision making for the site. The Cabinet asked for clarification over whether the Council would own the plans and intellectual property prepared by the developer in the event that it was called upon to pay the costs as it felt that the Council should benefit from any work that it paid for.

RESOLVED:

1. That progress on the Future High Streets Fund bid be noted; and
2. That the Council underwrites the planning costs, in the sum of £1.4M, in respect of the Co-Op scheme, in the event that the scheme does not proceed.

37. CONSULTATION ON CHANGES TO THE TRANSPORT FOR LONDON BUS SERVICES 428 AND 492

The Chairman reminded Cabinet that the Council had only recently concluded discussions with Transport for London (TfL) regarding the routing of bus services in the town centre and adjoining areas to improve traffic flows and better meet the need of bus users. The current consultation on proposed changes to TfL bus services 428 and 492 was therefore a cause of some concern. Whilst it might be appropriate for bus companies to examine services where they felt that there was duplication of services this was not the case here and one of the proposals for the 492 would remove an important route at the same time as the new secondary school at Stone was due to open. He felt that the introduction of this proposal in particular should be deferred so that the demand implications arising from the opening of the new school could be properly assessed.

The Head of Regeneration explained the proposed changes to Transport for London bus services 428 and 492 from January 2020, which were currently subject to public consultation until 10 September 2019. The proposed changes would result in a reduction in connectivity between certain parts of the London Borough of Bexley, including Erith and Sidcup, and the north-west part of Dartford through to Bluewater and vice-versa. The report detailed

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specific impacts likely to arise as a result of the proposed changes including the likely additional pressures on remaining bus services and impacts on users, including school children, people travelling along London Road and users of Darent Valley Hospital. TfL had taken the approach that its sole responsibility was to London's bus users whereas the proposals affected users across the London/Kent boundary and had significant implications on cross-connectivity.

The proposals had been discussed extensively by the Cabinet Advisory Panel and the Joint Transportation Board. There had been concerns about increased costs for passengers arising from having to change buses in order to get to their destinations, increased journey times and the safety implications for school children having to break their journeys and the impact for people accessing Darent Valley Hospital. Detailed work was being carried out with TfL and KCC to seek to alleviate and mitigate the impact on customers in the Dartford area. There had been discussions with Arriva regarding the possibility of Arriva bus services covering the removed section of the 492 bus route but the company had not been keen to do so and it was therefore important to keep lobbying TfL. The Council had therefore prepared a formal objection to the proposals in respect of proposed changes to the 492 bus route and the London Borough of Bexley and Kent County Council (KCC) also intended to object to TfL's proposals. KCC had now agreed that a joint objection should be lodged by them and Dartford.

The Chairman welcomed this approach but wondered whether the joint response to the consultation was sufficiently candid or robust. TfL needed to appreciate the strength of feeling and opposition to their proposals and the disappointment at the approach being taken by TfL given more productive co-operation with them over changes to other bus services in the town centre. He felt that a joint response with KCC should be made but that it would also be appropriate for the Council to make a separate representation to make the strength of its opposition clear. Members reflected that the 492 currently delivered a very good service that was well used and felt that if TfL had concerns about its commercial viability it could have considered other options such as reducing the frequency of the service in order to make it more viable rather than deleting the route. The implications for people living in the West of Dartford travelling to Bluewater were also discussed. The Chairman noted that the proposals had generated considerable local concern and campaign groups had been set up to oppose the changes and that a petition had been set up. He recognised the intention of the petitioners but felt that people should be encouraged to make their views known to TfL by responding to the consultation individually as otherwise he feared that TfL would treat the petition as a single consultation response which would not do justice to the strength of opposition.

The Cabinet noted that the Cabinet Advisory Panel had strongly endorsed the recommendations contained in the report and had been concerned at the impact that the proposed changes to the bus routes would have on local bus users and welcomed the ongoing efforts with partners to mitigate these impacts.

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RESOLVED:

1. That the concerns highlighted in paragraphs 3.7-3.12, 3.16-17 and Appendix B to the report be the basis for a joint formal objection with KCC to Transport for London's consultation, in particular to not support the proposed changes to bus route 492;
2. That the Council should make separate robust and candid representations to TfL to ensure that TfL is fully aware of the strength of the Council's objections to its proposals; and
3. That officers continue to liaise with Transport for London, Kent County Council and non-Transport for London bus service operators beyond the consultation closing date of 10 September 2019 to seek a resolution that will alleviate the impact of proposed changes on customers in the Dartford area, in line with the identified mitigations sought, as set out in paragraph 3.19.

38. MINUTES OF THE STRATEGIC HOUSING BOARD ON 10 JULY 2019

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Mote, Chairman of the Strategic Housing Board, to the meeting. He reminded the Cabinet that the Strategic Housing Board was a new body set up at the Annual Council meeting in May and would operate at the same level as the Development Control Board, although it was not a quasi-judicial body. The Board's remit was to examine housing issues at a strategic level and to develop a better understanding of the nature of the local housing economy, key players, demographics and the needs of local people and how these could be delivered. The minutes of the first meeting were submitted for the Cabinet's consideration.

Councillor Mote explained that the first meeting of the Board had been scene setting to develop a better understanding of the Board's remit but that he expected to develop momentum quickly moving forward.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Strategic Housing Board held on 10 July 2019 be noted.

39. REVIEW OF CHARGING PERIODS FOR HIGHFIELD ROAD CAR PARKS

The Cabinet considered a report which reviewed the operation of the Highfield Road (Spring Vale) and Highfield Road (South) pay and display car parks following changes introduced following the review of Fees and Charges applying from 1 April 2018 and the making of the Dartford Borough Council (Off Street Parking Places) Order 2018. The new order amended the operating hours of off-street car parks in the town centre area from 0800-18.30 to 08.00 to 20.00 hours and subsequently included a new pay and display car park at the former informal car park at Highfield Road (South). The Joint Transportation Board (JTB) on 11 June 2019 received a petition and

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deputation from local residents and the users of the Gurdwara asking the Council to shorten the hours of operation of the Highfield Road (Spring Vale) car park back to 18.30 hours as they considered that the extended hours had impacted heavily on users to the point that the car park was now severely under-utilised during the evenings. The JTB had asked for a report to be prepared detailing usage levels and revenues generated by the town centre car parks and arising from this that Cabinet be asked to review the charging periods and possibly to reduce them if justified by the usage levels. The data collected suggested that the trend in town centre car parks over the last 12 months remained largely unchanged indicating that there had been no significant factors that had affected car park usage after 18.30 but that there was reluctance to pay to use the Highfield Road (Spring Vale) car park after 18.30.

Cabinet had considered objections to the proposal to create a formal pay and display car park at Highfield Road (South) at its meeting on 24 May 2018. Cabinet had confirmed the proposal but asked that a review into usage and any displacement arising from this should be reviewed after 6 months. Due to the need to carry out preparatory works the pay and display operation did not come into effect until February 2019. Usage figures collected since that time suggested that the car park had previously attracted a significant level of parking linked to residential properties, unauthorised long stay uses and by employees of commercial businesses. The car park had subsequently become little used but there had been no evidence of disproportionate displacement into adjoining residential streets and no complaints from local residents or Members.

It was noted that the Cabinet Advisory Panel had questioned the level of displacement from the Highfield Road (South) car park and felt that, given that the car park was not now being used, the degree of upset caused to local residents, and the minimal level of revenue generated by the car park, the charges should either be removed or that some form of dispensation or permit should be given to residents. The Cabinet Advisory Panel agreed to recommend that the Cabinet should reconsider the charging regimes for both of the car parks in light of the impact on residents arising from the changes and the level of displacement observed by local Members. In particular that the hours of operation of the Highfield Road (Spring Vale) car park should revert to 08.00 to 18.30 and that the Highfield Road (South) car park should either be a free car park or that some form of dispensation or permit scheme should be introduced for local residents.

The Chairman said that it was clear that users of the Spring Vale car park, including the Gurdwara and local residents, were keen for the charging period to end at 18.30 and would benefit from this change. The situation with the Highfield Road (South) car park had correctly been subject to review as it had been clear that the car park had attracted unauthorised long stay uses, dumped vehicles, car repair work and use by employees of commercial businesses before the introduction of the pay and display arrangements. These uses were not the reason why the Council provided car parks. The fact that the car park was now significantly under-used pointed to the fact that much of the previous usage was not legitimate. The current level of usage

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now meant that the car park was not serving a valuable purpose nor supporting town centre regeneration. He noted the views expressed by the Cabinet Advisory Panel and felt that there was merit in considering some form of paid resident's permit parking scheme in the car park and possibly in Highfield Road. He felt that part of the car park should still remain available on a pay and display basis. The Cabinet felt that this would provide a reasonable compromise to meet the needs of local residents and car park users.

RESOLVED:

1. That the charging period for pay and display car parking at the Highfield Road (Spring Vale) car park should be 08:00 to 18:30; and
2. That consideration be given to the introduction of a Residents' Permit parking scheme at the Highfield Road (South) car park and along Highfield Road as outlined above and that a scheme be developed for consultation with affected residents.

40. KENT HEALTH AND SAFETY FLEXIBLE WARRANTS

The Cabinet considered a report which detailed the potential benefits to the Council through participation in a Kent-wide Local Authority Health and Safety Flexible Warranting Scheme similar to that previously operated in conjunction with the Health and Safety Executive from 2007 to 2013/14. It was proposed that the Council should sign up to the Memorandum of Understanding so that flexible warranting arrangements could be introduced by September 2019.

RESOLVED:

That Dartford Borough Council be a signatory to the Kent Health and Safety Flexible Warrant Scheme.

41. LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN - ANNUAL REVIEW LETTER 2019

The Cabinet received the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Review letter for 2019. Five new complaints had been lodged with the Ombudsman in 2018/19, down from 16 in the previous year. During 2018/19 the Ombudsman made decisions on three of these complaints, declining to investigate two and upholding one whilst decisions were still pending on two further complaints. The report also detailed how complaints were logged and monitored and the processes in place to ensure that all complaints were addressed and lessons learnt where appropriate.

RESOLVED:

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That the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter 2019, attached at Appendix A to the report and the corresponding data tables at Appendices B, C and D to the report, be noted.

42. CORPORATE PLAN KEY ACTIONS AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR QUARTER 1 - 2019/20

The Cabinet received a report which provided details of the latest set of Corporate Plan key actions and performance indicators for the first quarter of 2019/20.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet notes the contents of the key action and performance indicator monitoring reports attached at Appendices A and B to the report.

43. MINUTES OF THE POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE HELD ON 18 JUNE 2019

The Cabinet received the minutes of the Policy Overview Committee held on 18 June 2019.

It was noted that a Member of the Cabinet Advisory Panel had wished for the Cabinet's attention to be drawn to the first bullet point of the resolution contained in minute 9 of the Policy Overview Committee minutes (page 101 in the agenda). This related to the need for 'sign-posting' on the Council's web site for customers wishing to claim Universal Credit to be improved. She wondered whether it would be possible for the Cabinet to stipulate a timeframe for this to happen as claiming universal credit correctly was a time sensitive issue and she felt that this action needed to be put in place as soon as possible so that people were not left waiting for longer due to lack of awareness of their entitlement.

The Cabinet endorsed this point and asked for the necessary 'sign-posting' to be placed on the Council's web site.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Policy Overview Committee held on 18 June 2019 be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm

Councillor J A Kite, MBE
CHAIRMAN

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