

TANDRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Minutes and report to Council of the virtual meeting of the Committee held on the 16th June 2020 at 7.30pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Connolly (Chairman), Vickers (Vice Chairman), Lee, Mansfield, Milton, Orrick, Ridge, Stamp, Swann, N.White and Wren.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Allen, Caulcott, Farr, Langton, Lockwood, Mills, Pursehouse, Rujbally, Swann and C. White.

19. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 10th March 2020 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

COMMITTEE DECISIONS *(Under powers delegated to the Committee)*

20. ANIMAL WARDEN AND STRAY DOG COLLECTION SERVICE

A report was submitted to update Members about changes to this service since its transfer to the Mole Valley / Tandridge environmental health partnership. The service had previously been undertaken by SDK Environmental Ltd under a contract with Tandridge which terminated in April 2020. The report advised that, following unforeseen delays due to the Covid-19 pandemic, an animal warden had taken up post on the 8th June 2020. The report summarised the purpose of the post and explained that an out of hours stray dog collection provider (Clements Environmental) had also been commissioned to operate across both districts. Valgrays Border Collie & Animal Rescue had been engaged to provide temporary assistance throughout May and June 2020 when the service was suspended. Members expressed their thanks to Valgrays for their help during that time.

It was anticipated that the new service would be more proactive in terms of encouraging responsible dog ownership. The potential for Parish Councils to assist with the delivery of the service was also acknowledged.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

21. LICENSING AND MONITORING OF FIREWORK ACTIVITY IN THE DISTRICT

Representations from the RSPCA, seeking greater controls over the use of fireworks, had been discussed by the Committee on the 14th November 2019. At that time, the Committee favoured measures aimed at encouraging / enabling less harmful use of fireworks, including greater controls regarding their sale and reducing the minimum legal noise level from the current 120 decibels. As well as the harm caused to pets,

livestock and wildlife, the distress caused to vulnerable residents and the tendency for fireworks to be used throughout the year had also been highlighted. However, Members had not wished to discourage communities from organising properly controlled firework events.

In accordance with the request at that meeting, a report was submitted regarding the extent to which the Council could influence the more considerate use of fireworks. This explained the current statutory restrictions on their use and sale, and the fact that enforcement powers rested with Trading Standards and the Police. Information was also provided about the Government's response to recent national lobbying. The report confirmed that all firework displays on Council-owned land were already referred to the Tandridge Safety Advisory Group (SAG). It was considered that, in future, SAGs should ask organisers to use lower-decibel fireworks and to publicise displays in advance.

Actions aimed at raising public awareness, lobbying central government, and engaging with local businesses and hospitality venues were proposed.

Members suggested that Parish Councils should be engaged in attempts to eradicate the anti-social use of fireworks. The importance of minimising the harm arising from private, 'back garden' displays was also discussed.

RESOLVED – that:

- A. the report be noted;
- B. the introduction of a public awareness campaign to educate residents, retailers and hospitality venues about the impact of fireworks on pets, livestock and vulnerable people in the District be supported; and
- C. the Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, write to Claire Coutinho MP and the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, outlining the Committee's concerns and recommendations, including a desire to reduce the period for the unprohibited use of fireworks before and after 5th November (currently 15th October to 10th November).

22. COMMUNITY SERVICES DELIVERY PLAN 2019/20 - QUARTER 4 PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee considered a progress report against its 2019/20 delivery plan for the fourth quarter of that year. This included the impact of Covid-19 on both the refuse contract and the implementation of the new on-street parking enforcement service. Regarding the latter, it was confirmed that Civil Enforcement Officers from Sevenoaks DC had completed an audit of yellow lines, signs and restrictions with a view to maximising compliance. It was anticipated that parking meters in Caterham would become operational in the New Year. The Committee was also advised that the process for calculating the percentage of household waste sent for recycling etc (KPI CS2) would be examined to test whether the Council's actual performance was better than the percentages being reported.

RESOLVED – that performance against the agreed Community Services Committee Delivery Plan for the fourth quarter of 2019/20 be noted.

23. OVERVIEW OF GRANT ALLOCATIONS AND SUPPORT FOR THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

The Committee discussed a report which provided a breakdown of its grants budget for 2020/21 (Appendix A refers). The report also invited the Committee to review the timescales and criteria for the allocation of small grants via the Tandridge Together Community Fund for 2020/21.

Arising from the grants awarded to the Caterham & Warlingham and Oxted Citizens Advice Bureaux, it was agreed that representatives from both organisations be invited to a future meeting to provide the Committee with a greater understanding of their operations.

RESOLVED – that:

- A. the current levels of funding allocations be noted;
- B. representatives of the Caterham & Warlingham and Oxted Citizens Advice Bureaux be invited to a future meeting to inform the Committee about their services and operating models; and
- C. the timescales and criteria for the allocation of small grants via the Tandridge Together Community Fund for 2020/21, as attached at Appendix B, be agreed.

Note: Councillor Orrick declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item, given his role of Chairman of East Surrey Dial-a-Ride. ESDAR competed with the East Surrey Rural Transport Partnership which featured in the report.

24. CHARGES AND SUBSIDIES FOR ACTIVITIES IN OUR OPEN SPACES

A report was presented about the need to progress policies (complementary to the Open Spaces Strategy) in relation to sports pitches, pavilions, woodlands and open spaces to address the following issues:

- poor drainage at sports pitches
- outdated pavilions and sports facilities
- sports associations facing financial challenges
- the high cost of maintaining open spaces relative to the modest income being generated.

The report referred to opportunities for making open spaces more financially sustainable and community focused. The scope for more effective management of woodlands and trees through partnership working was also identified.

RESOLVED – that Officers review the Council's policies on charging and subsidising activities in its open spaces and prepare a set of policy recommendations.

25. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED – that members of the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting for the consideration of the agenda item covered by Minute 26 below as it involves the likely disclosure of “*information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, including the authority holding that information*” (Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 refers) and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

26. RECYCLING AND REFUSE CONTRACT UPDATE

At its previous meeting, the Committee had agreed to award the new recycling and refuse collection contract to the existing contractor, Biffa Plc, with effect from the 4th October 2020.

A further report was presented which advocated an extension to the current contract, thereby delaying the implementation of the new contract by six months.

RESOLVED – that the current Biffa contract be extended to the 4th April 2021.

Rising: 9.41 p.m.

APPENDIX 'A'

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Breakdown of the Community Services Committee's grants budgets 2018/19 to 2020/21

	Organisation / initiative	20/21 allocation	19/20 actual spend	18/19 actual spend	Comments
1	East Surrey Rural Transport Partnership (ESRTP)	£68,000	£68,000	£68,000	<p>The initial 3 year Service Level Agreement (SLA) with ESRTP has been extended by 12 months until 31st March 2021. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £20,000 for the provision of a dial-a-ride service - £48,000 for the provision of a community transport advice line
2a	Caterham & Warlingham Citizens' Advice Bureau	£56,368	£56,368	£56,368	<p>Individual annual service level agreements are in place with each of the two Citizens' Advice Bureaux. These annual revenue grants have been paid for many years, adjusted for inflation until 2016/17. Since then, the grants have been frozen at the amounts shown to the left.</p> <p>Oxted CAB also benefits from the provision of 6 free business permits for the Ellice Road car park (for the use of CAB staff).</p>
2b	Oxted Citizens' Advice Bureau	£55,434	£55,434	£55,434	
2c	Caterham & Warlingham Citizens Advice Bureau (CWCAB) – contribution for rent	£8,000	£8,000	£8,000	<p>An additional grant towards rental costs levied by Surrey County Council for the use of space in the Caterham Valley library building is provided to the Caterham & Warlingham CAB.</p> <p>By way of background, the CWCAB used to operate from the Soper Hall, Caterham (formally owned by TDC) rent free. Upon the transfer of that building to the Soper Hall Community Centre Limited, that new landlord began charging rent. Annual budgetary provision of £8,000 was therefore established so that TDC could offset CWCAB's rental costs.</p> <p>Subsequently, in 2016, CWCAB secured alternative accommodation in Caterham Valley Library and the £8,000 provision was redirected to the CAB itself to enable it to meet its rental obligations to its current landlord, Surrey County Council.</p>

	Organisation / initiative	20/21 allocation	19/20 actual spend	18/19 actual spend	Comments
3a	Tandridge Voluntary Action	£17,500	£16,950	£16,950	<p>Grant funding has been provided to the TVA since 2009/10.</p> <p>Funding is provided as part of an annual Partnership Grant Funding Agreement together with Surrey County Council and the East Surrey Clinical Commissioning Group.</p>
3b	Tandridge Voluntary Action - payment to cover SCC's service charge in respect of the Oxted Community Hub	£6,428	£6,130	£6,007	<p>The Oxted Community Hub is the name for the office and meeting room space above the Oxted library building. It is currently utilised by Oxted CAB and TVA.</p> <p>TDC has been paying this charge since the Community Hub was established in 2010 as part of an agreement with Surrey County Council (the freeholder) and following approval by TDC's Community Services Committee on 27th Jan 2009.</p> <p>SCC does not charge the voluntary sector tenants for rent and made a significant capital contribution to the original conversion of the premises, including the installation of a lift to ensure that the CAB services are accessible to clients with disabilities.</p> <p>TVA receive this annual payment as the Head Lessee of the Community Hub, although Oxted CAB also benefit from the arrangement as they become exempt from the service charge liability. The same could be said for any other voluntary organisation which might rent space in the Community Hub.</p>
4	Subscription to Surrey Community Action's village hall advisory service	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000	<p>This is an annual subscription to Surrey Community Action for access to its 'Community Buildings Advice and Guidance Service'. It helps to fund the cost of a Surrey Community Buildings Advisor.</p> <p>This service offers information, advice and guidance to community building managers. Topics include governance issues; health & safety; other regulatory compliance matters; support for business planning and marketing; funding; sharing best practice and environmental sustainability. The Advisor also provides an 'in person' consultancy service - up to two site visits per year per building.</p>

	Organisation / initiative	20/21 allocation	19/20 actual spend	18/19 actual spend	Comments
5	East Surrey Museum	£4,400	£4,400	£4,380	This annual revenue grant is adjusted for inflation. The building is owned by the District Council and is accounted for via the 'Housing Revenue Account' (HRA) as opposed to its 'General Fund'. The Museum occupies the ground floor rent free (this arrangement was last reviewed by the former Rent Subsidy Grants Sub-Committee in July 2016). The first floor is used as Temporary (Housing) Accommodation.
6	Surrey Museums Consultative Committee subscription	£3,000	£3,000	£2,987	The annual membership subscription ensures that the East Surrey Museum remains eligible for grant aid from various other sources, including the Lottery.
7	Surrey Youth Games Awards	£6,000	£6,000	n/a	In 2018 all the Surrey Chief Executives signed up to participate in the Specsavers Surrey Youth Games every summer until 2021. £3,500 is paid annually to Active Surrey to take part and £6,000 is paid to Freedom Leisure to organise and coach a team of young athletes.
8	Tandridge Small Grants Fund	£0	£7,000	£20,000	As agreed previously by this committee, Tandridge's contribution to the small grants fund has reduced over the past three years. The small grants fund is now the Tandridge Together Community Fund which is made up of money accumulated through sales of tickets in the Tandridge Together Lottery.
	TOTAL	£227,130	£233,282	£240,126	

Small Grants Scheme 2020/21 - timescales and criteria

Applications will be welcomed from community and voluntary organisations which support the health and wellbeing of residents within Tandridge.

Timescales:

- Application forms will be made available from the beginning of September 2020
- Deadline for the submission of applications - beginning November 2020
- Review of applications - November / December 2020
- Recommendations referred to the Health & Wellbeing Board in January 2021
- Applications will be determined by February 2021

Criteria:

1. Organisations must demonstrate that their activities meet **one or more** of the following objectives:

The provision of support or services that:

- (i) support people to be able to live independently for as long as possible
- (ii) support people to improve their emotional and physical health
- (iii) target services at under-represented and / or hard to reach groups
- (iv) effectively safeguard people from abuse, neglect or poor treatment
- (v) reduce social isolation
- (vi) help reduce reliance on alternative, higher cost state interventions
- (vii) support and enable carers to carry on caring for as long as possible

2. The Council will exclude any applications that link to:
 - Rent / lease costs
 - Building maintenance
 - Vehicle maintenance / running costs
3. Organisations must be able to demonstrate the impact that their project will have in terms of number of people to benefit and the outcomes that will be achieved.
4. Care organisations must demonstrate:
 - (i) a genuine need for financial assistance
 - (ii) that they are financially sustainable
 - (iii) that they are a fully constituted organisation with an equalities statement, health and safety policy and public liability insurance and bank account with two signatories.
5. The Council must not be the sole contributor towards the activity in question (i.e. funding should also be forthcoming from the organisation itself and/or other sources).
6. National charities and organisations without a tangible presence in the District will be ineligible.