
Extraordinary Housing, Health and Communities Committee

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT on Tuesday, 21 April 2026 from 6.00 pm - 6.20 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Hayden Brawn, Ann Cavanagh, Kieran Golding, Alastair Gould, Angela Harrison (Vice-Chair), Peter MacDonald, Peter Marchington, Ben J Martin, Tom Nundy, Carrie Pollard and Karen Watson.

PRESENT (VIRTUALLY): Councillor Dolley Wooster.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Steph Curtis, Charlotte Hudson, Tim Neal, Sarah-Jane Radley and Roxanne Sheppard.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Lloyd Bowen, Derek Carnell and Pete Neal.

880 **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

The Chair outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

881 **Declarations of Interest**

No disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests were declared.

882 **Procurement of Build Contract for CCTV Control Room Expansion**

The officer introduced the report and explained that it set out the background to the expansion of the CCTV Control Centre and detailed the procurement process that had been undertaken. Following the tender process and discussions with the Council's consultant, it was recommended that a contractor be appointed for the expansion build, subject to planning permission being granted. Members were reminded that there were four recommendations before the Committee.

Members made comments and asked questions including:

- clarification that any decision taken would not fetter Members' role in any separate planning decision, should they be involved elsewhere;
- the additional CCTV capacity the expansion would provide and the potential to take on further local authority, parish or commercial contracts;
- the possible income that might be generated from additional contracts;
- whether the proposal involved extending the existing building or constructing a new one, and the likely impact on the car park.

Officers responded and advised that:

- approval of the recommendations would not prejudice any future planning decision, and if planning permission were not granted the build would not proceed;
- the expansion would provide four additional operator desks, giving capacity to support up to two additional local authority contracts or a larger number of commercial or parish CCTV contracts;
- income levels were difficult to quantify in advance and depended on the nature and scale of individual contracts, noting that indicative figures had previously been reported to the Policy and Resources Committee; and
- the proposal was to extend the existing control room at the multi-storey car park, which would not take up a significant amount of car parking space.

Councillor Ben J Martin proposed the recommendations and these were seconded by Councillor Nundy.

Resolved:

- (1) That the Committee approves the appointment of Company A as supplier for the CCTV Control Centre Expansion Build, subject to Planning Permission.***
- (2) That the Committee gives delegated authority to the Director of Resources to agree increased costs should an inflationary uplift become necessary due to any delay in planning permission being granted.***
- (3) That the Committee give delegated authority to the Head of Legal Partnership and S151 Officer to undertake all legal and financial requirements necessary to complete the CCTV Control Centre Expansion Build, subject to Planning Permission.***
- (4) That the Head of Legal Partnership has delegated authority to negotiate and complete the contract and all ancillary documents as may be necessary.***

883 Winter Shelter project for rough sleepers

The Chair explained that the report followed previous discussions by the Committee and set out three recommendations, including the establishment of a working group to review the Council's approach. Members were advised that the proposed working group would involve two meetings: an initial in-person workshop to examine detailed service models and options, followed by a second meeting to consider conclusions. It was proposed that the same Members attend both sessions to ensure continuity, and that the outcome be reported back to the next meeting of the Committee.

Officers explained that the recommendation for a working group reflected the complexity of rough sleeping provision and the need for Member direction. It was noted that the Council had operated rough sleeping services for a number of years, with grant funding remaining broadly static while demand had increased. Officers advised that rough sleeping services were non-statutory, but formed an important part of the Council's wider support offer, and that any night shelter provision would need to be considered alongside existing services such as hostel provision, outreach, and the use of nightly-let accommodation.

Members were advised that the current delivery model was becoming increasingly difficult to sustain, particularly in terms of staffing pressures, and that there were a range of potential approaches, from street-based provision to more intensive support models for smaller numbers. Officers emphasised that there were significant financial considerations and trade-offs, and that Member input was required on the overall direction of services within the available funding envelope. It was also noted that enforcement considerations linked to rough sleeping would need to be explored alongside the Environment Committee at a later stage.

Members made comments including:

- support for the Council taking a compassionate and responsible approach to rough sleeping, notwithstanding that the service was non-statutory;
- recognition of the pressures faced by officers delivering services within limited resources;
- support for the establishment of a working group to allow detailed consideration of options;
- the importance of a holistic approach, including voluntary and faith-sector

provision; and

- the need to progress the work at pace, given existing contractual arrangements and winter planning.

In response to questions, officers advised that the intention was to bring the outcome of the working group to the July meeting of the Committee, and that early meetings would be required to allow sufficient time for any changes to service delivery, including volunteer training and contractual decisions.

Members expressed interest in volunteering to take part in the working group.

The Chair confirmed that the working group would include Councillors Watson, McDonald, Marchington and Pollard, together with the Chair and Vice-Chair, and that Councillors Bowen and Neal would also be invited to participate.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor MacDonald and seconded by Councillor Watson.

Resolved:

- (1) That a working group be established to determine the Council's approach to rough sleeping services, including whether this should include night shelter provision.***
- (2) That delegated authority be given to the Head of Housing and Communities to implement the agreed approach.***
- (3) That the Head of Housing and Communities report the outcome of the working group to the next meeting of the Committee.***

Chair

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All minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel