

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

MINUTES of a meeting of the Cabinet held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Monday, 15 January 2018.

PRESENT: Miss S J Carey, Mr P B Carter, CBE, Mr M C Dance, Mr G K Gibbens, Mr R W Gough, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr E E C Hotson, Mr P J Oakford and Mr M Whiting

ALSO PRESENT:

IN ATTENDANCE:

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

48. Apologies and substitutions

(Item 2)

Apologies were received from Mr John Simmonds, Cabinet Member for Finance who was substituted by Mrs Crabtree, Deputy Cabinet Member for Finance and Mr Andrew Scott-Clark, Director of Public Health who was substituted by Alison Duggal, Deputy Director of Public Health.

49. Declarations of Interest

(Item 3)

None.

50. Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 December 2017

(Item 4)

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 11 December 2017, were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman accordingly.

51. 17/00115 - Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2018-2022

(Item 5)

Cabinet received a report seeking approval of the KCC Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2018-2022.

Mr Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education introduced the report and plan for members. He explained that the plan was updated annually and as part of that process District Councils, Key stakeholders and partners and the KCC Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee had all been consulted.

He said that two issues were particularly relevant to the plan before cabinet for consideration; firstly, the shift in proposed expansions from Primary Schools to Secondary Schools, as those children that had required the places provided by the

major expansion programme for Primary Schools now entered Secondary Schools and secondly the failure of the National Free School Programme to deliver in a number of key areas resulting in a pushing back of responsibilities to local government and the associated financial pressures that the National Free School Programme had been intended to resolve.

He also referred to the work achieved as part of the Special School Programme of expansions and improvement, the reissued SEND strategy and the underlying pressures evident in the area of special education provision.

The Leader referred to the problems that had arisen as a result of the academisation of a large number of schools, without the transfer of responsibility to provide school places, which had led to many county councils funding expansions at schools over which they had no control once expanded. He also expressed concern that County Council's may be asked to provide funding to make up the shortfall after Basic Need and Developer Contributions and assured members that an ongoing conversation was underway with the relevant government ministers to try to ensure that Local government was not financially disadvantaged by the shortfalls of the National Free School Programme.

Keith Abbott, Director – Education Planning and Access spoke to the item and thanked schools and trusts across the county who had put in place short term measures to address shortfalls in school places caused by SFA delays

It was RESOLVED that the Commissioning Plan be approved.

52. Budget Monitoring Report - October 2017

(Item 6)

Cabinet received a report providing the budget monitoring position up to 31 October 2017-18 for both revenue and capital budgets, including an update on key activity data for the council's highest risk budgets.

Mrs Crabtree, Deputy Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the item for members and reported that the predicted overspend was now forecast at £8.3million approximately half of which related to costs of supporting unaccompanied asylum seeking children and work continued to seek redress from Government for those costs.

In relation to the Capital budget a £39.7million variance was reported; an £8million increase from the previous month. Of this new variance £1.2million was 'real' and the remainder was a result of rephrasing.

Mr Andy Wood, Corporate Director of Finance reported that Corporate Management Team would be meeting again to speak about the actions being taken to address the deficit, the likelihood that those approaches would be successful and, if necessary, to look at additional ways of further reducing the overspend.

In relation to UASC costs, KCC had contacted government following the change of minister responsible for immigration seeking continuity and a swift resolution to the shortfall in government funding.

The Leader reported that he would meet with the new minister at the earliest opportunity and hoped that negotiations would continue to be positive and that a resolution could be found. KCC would send a letter in advance of any meeting setting out the progress made to date and assurances received from the previous minister, Brandon Lewis. He regarded the success of these negotiations as crucial not only to balancing the budget at KCC but also to the success of the national dispersal programme in order that top tier councils could confidently accept UASC individuals without fear of funding shortfalls negatively impacting on their budgets.

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Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report September 2017- 2018	
1.	That the forecast revenue budget monitoring position for 2017-18 and capital budget monitoring position for 2017-18 to 2019-20, and the need to eliminate the forecast pressure on the revenue budget as the year progresses be NOTED.
2.	That the changes to the capital programme as detailed in section 5.4 be agreed.
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED	None.
CONFLICTS OF INTEREST	None.
DISPENSATIONS GRANTED	None.