

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

---

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held in the Online on Tuesday, 9 June 2020.

PRESENT: Mr A Booth (Chairman), Mr J Wright (Vice-Chairman), Mr M A C Balfour, Mr P V Barrington-King, Mrs P M Beresford, Mr R H Bird, Mr G Cooke, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mr D Farrell, Mr A R Hills (Substitute for Mrs R Binks), Mr R C Love, OBE, Mr A M Ridgers and Dr L Sullivan

ALSO PRESENT: Mr P J Oakford (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services) and Mr M E Whybrow.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms Z Cooke (Corporate Director of Finance), Mr B Watts (General Counsel) and Mrs A Taylor (Scrutiny Research Officer)

### UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

#### **25. Impact of Covid-19 Outbreak on 2020-21 and 2021-22 Budgets (to follow)** *(Item C1)*

1. Mr Oakford introduced this item giving an update on the revenue budget since the Covid-19 outbreak and an estimate of the initial costs to KCC.
2. Ms Cooke gave Members a presentation setting out the financial implications of Covid-19. The presentation is available [online via this link](#).
3. Mr Oakford confirmed the circumstances around Government's reimbursement of costs incurred by KCC including discretionary costs.
4. A Member asked, could the funding table be provided as a live document? This would be provided and updated monthly. Could this also identify the Council's savings such as heating and lighting in offices? Ms Cooke said that this was being identified as part of budget monitoring.
5. Referring to car parking fees and potential losses a Member commented that if working at home was to continue this would be a long term issue.
6. How many care homes were still to file a claim for expenditure? Ms Cooke confirmed that of the 544 care homes required to complete the Government's tracker 38 were currently outstanding, there was confidence that the majority, if not all, would complete the tracker by the deadline ensuring they received their funding, the Council was in contact with the outstanding care homes.
7. Mr Oakford confirmed that it was understood that Kent care homes had had the lowest rate of infection in the country.

## **26. Scrutiny Committee Virtual Meetings Protocol**

*(Item A3)*

1. In response to a question Mr Watts explained that no further guidance had been received from government to date about the continuation of the regulations allowing virtual meetings. Any update would be reported back to Policy and Resources in due course.

2. A Member asked for confirmation that thought would be given to Members viewing Part 2 exempt items on any device. Mr Watts explained that this was being reviewed to ensure that Members were able to access the documents that they needed.

3. In relation to substitutions the intention of the protocol was to notify Democratic Services as early as possible but it was recognised that this was an ideal.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Committee adopt the Virtual Meetings Protocol.

## **27. Scrutiny Committee Update**

*(Item C2)*

Mr Watts introduced his report which included the refocussed Select Committee options.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Committee:

- a. Notes the current Governance approach to virtual meetings.
- b. Agrees a work programme of focussed enquiries to be carried out.
- c. Delegates to the Scrutiny Officer the development and delivery of the best option for this programme, in consultation with the Chair.
- d. Temporarily Suspends the current Select Committee Topic Review Work Programme.