



COUNTY COUNCIL – 17 October 2019

Item 5 – Questions and Answers

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Question 1

COUNTY COUNCIL

Thursday 17 October 2019

**Question by Rob Thomas to Paul Carter, Leader of the Council and
Cabinet Member for Health Reform**

Is the Council committed to selling our land to deliver option 2, a new hospital in Canterbury, as per the proposals being considered by the East Kent Hospitals University Foundation Trust? In answering this, please explain whether there are any conditions the Council would attach to any sale as the new hospital would be dependent upon Canterbury City Council, Kent County Council and another landowner providing the land for its construction.

Answer

The current proposal for the redevelopment of the Kent and Canterbury Hospital which has been promoted by a developer requires the acquisition of land which is in the ownership of Kent County Council. KCC have been approached by a number of parties and is open to the disposal of the site to support a hospital redevelopment subject to the Council's best value and fiduciary considerations. However, I am keen that social value benefits should be part of the consideration.

The proposed disposal of the site was reported as an exempt item at the Council's Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee in July 2018. Further discussions are currently underway to understand the developer's proposals further. The detail of these discussions are commercially sensitive and as I am sure you appreciate would potentially jeopardise the commercial position of the County Council if they were in the public domain, a further update report will however be considered by the Council's Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee in due course.

I will continue to use my influence to help and support a new hospital to be built in Canterbury alongside the exciting new medical school being built by University of Kent and Canterbury Christ Church University.

COUNTY COUNCIL

Thursday 17 October 2019

Question by Trudy Dean to Mike Whiting,
Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport & Waste

Following the formal adoption of the Pollinator Action Plan at July's County Council, could the Cabinet Member please advise how local groups wishing to help establish wildflower rich verges should go about doing so and what support the County Council will provide them with?

Answer

If local groups have identified sites that they feel would make good wildflower verges and they would like to become involved, then they should contact our Highway Soft Landscape team. The team can discuss the proposals for each site and possible maintenance changes as well as reviewing the site with our partners Kent Wildlife Trust and the Bee Conservation Trust.

COUNTY COUNCIL

Thursday 17 October 2019

**Question by Sarah Hamilton to Mike Whiting,
Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport & Waste**

Relative speed of traffic is an issue that is constantly raised by residents particularly in the rural communities. Signage to advise speed limits may be regarded as ambiguous and inconsistent in some areas across my Division and I have endeavoured to understand how this can be addressed. The Police advise our Highways Officers as the issue involves enforcement, yet the likelihood of a Police presence in rural lanes today is minimal (there are no more 'Bobbies on the beat'). Given the reports of near misses, volume of residents' concerns and the concept of 'safety critical' used by our Highways Officers, what can be done please to help manage this issue, change driver behaviour and keep our residents feeling safe?

Answer

Tackling death and injury on Kent's roads is a key priority for the County Council. While speed is the main determining factor in the severity of road crashes, the slower the impact speed the less damaging the incident will be, speed isn't normally the main cause of the crash - it's the other things drivers do that lead to loss of concentration; things like distraction, impairment or poor hazard awareness. The KCC Casualty reduction team educates and advises road users every year through a range of initiatives to seek to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on Kent's roads. KCC also works alongside local communities and parishes to listen and respond to issues of ambiguity and inconsistency with regards to signage and speed limits. Requests for changes and enhancements to signage or speed limits are managed and delivered by district managers and, where applicable, through Parish Highways Improvement Plans in partnership with parish councils.

As far as the comment "there are no more bobbies on the beat", it was excellent to hear from Matthew Scott, the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner that there will be 147 additional police officers being bought into the field by the end of 2020/21

COUNTY COUNCIL

Thursday 17 October 2019

Question by Dan Daley to Mike Whiting,
Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport & Waste

For several years now there have been concerns about the safety of pedestrians trying to cross Fountain Lane opposite Barming Heath in Maidstone from St Andrews Road to Heath Road and vice-versa. The B246 is already a very busy road and is getting busier with all the additional development in the area. Unfortunately, the phasing of the traffic lights does not provide sufficient time for the less mobile or people with buggies and small children to cross in safety.

We have had many discussions with Highways officers on this matter over the years and it has been long agreed that there is a clear need for a pedestrian activated phase at the traffic lights. This has been recognised in the Section 106 developer contribution agreements. Could the Cabinet Member confirm that this matter will now be treated as a high priority by Kent Highways and will he provide a date when the pedestrian crossing will be installed?

Answer

Following a meeting in relation to progressing a junction improvement scheme at the A26 Tonbridge Road Maidstone at its junction with Fountain Lane, the Senior Project Manager from the Major Capital Programme Team has committed to delivering the pedestrian crossing facility at the Fountain Lane, Heath Road/St Andrews Road junction as quickly as possible, and has given assurance it will be constructed in early 2020.

COUNTY COUNCIL**Thursday 17 October 2019****Question by Ian Chittenden to Roger Gough,
Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education**

Kent County Council is spending just under £4m on youth services this financial year, however after carefully analysing the figures presented to the Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on 1st October, I have been alarmed at how many of Kent's poorest children are not being reached. Across the whole of Kent, just 1.94% of the 8 to 19-year-old cohort has attended a youth service on 4 or more occasions within the space of a year, however figures from October 2018 showed that 12.8% of all Kent pupils are entitled to Free School Meals (FSM). When drilling down into individual districts the situation becomes even more concerning. In Swale, just 0.44% of the cohort has attended at least 4 youth sessions, against an FSM entitlement rate of 16.2%. Contrast this with Sevenoaks which has a 3.24% attendance on 4+ occasions against a much lower FSM rate of 9.2%, and it becomes clear that services are simply failing to deliver for those who need them the most. Would the Cabinet Member please explain what measures will be put in place to address the current disparity of services and ensure that a greater proportion of Kent's poorest children are reached via the youth service provision going forward?

Answer

It is important to ensure that we are consistent in the data we are referring to in order to accurately reflect on the performance of KCC's Youth Services. Over the last 12 months, of the 221,634 young people aged 8-19 in Kent, 19,858 young people have been reached through KCC's internal and commissioned youth offer, representing 8.9%. Reach is part of the narrative regarding quality – a young person is considered reached once they have attended a youth setting 4+ times as this demonstrates a continued relationship with the setting/youth worker and is the indicator used by Mr Chittenden in his question.

The KCC youth offer works to reach those young people in the county with the greatest need. While the FSM indicator is a useful tool as with all data sets when used in isolation, can be misleading. As you are aware, FSM pupils are known to their attending school which receives a pupil premium to enable an enhanced offer within their school setting. If the school then identifies additional needs that cannot be met by the pupil premium, they can then refer into the KCC service. This can either be a direct contact into the KCC local youth offer (or children's centre depending on the age of the child/young person) or into the front door provision for Early Help, as appropriate.

Current targets and expectations surrounding the KCC youth offer (both directly and commissioned provision) is to reach 15% of the population and within this, to have a targeted focus on certain geographical areas (often the most deprived LSOAs for example) or young people. LSOAs are likely to include a range of deprivation factors, including FSM, hence we have a particular focus in the quality assurance of registration and reach against these.

For the 10 most deprived LSOAs within each district, we have a target of reaching 30% of the young people in the 8-19 age range. A target which is exceeded in all 12 districts. A table appended to the written version of my answer sets out the data by district.

14% or lower						
Top 10 Most Deprived LSOAs (8-19)	Total Reach	Target 30% of Total Reach	Actual Reach	Baseline	% Actual Reach/ Target Reach	Difference between Actual and Target Reach
Ashford	549	165	213	38.8	129.3	48
Canterbury	318	95	146	45.9	153.0	51
Dartford	401	120	193	48.1	160.4	73
Dover	460	138	233	50.7	168.8	95
Folkestone and Hythe	381	114	202	53.0	176.7	88
Gravesham	399	120	138	34.6	115.3	18
Maidstone	480	144	269	56.0	186.8	125
Sevenoaks	397	119	263	66.2	220.8	144
Swale	480	144	162	33.8	112.5	18
Thanet	592	178	302	51.0	170.0	124
Tonbridge and Malling	371	111	216	58.2	194.1	105
Tunbridge Wells	273	82	105	38.5	128.2	23
Kent	5101	1530	2442	47.9	159.6	912

It is important to note that while KCC is a key element of the county's youth work, it is only one element. Each district brings together an offer for young people that includes but is not restricted to sports groups (e.g. over 300 youth football groups in the county equates to approximately 25 per district), uniformed groups, such as Scouts, Guides and Cadets (as detailed in the smarties maps that were provided as appendices for the CYPE Cabinet Committee report in 2018), as well as many individually run local groups that have no affiliation to the wider youth offer. As an authority, we do not capture the volume of young people attending these groups.

KCC's core youth offer is currently being redefined following the integration of Children, Young People and Education Directorate. However, the principles will remain the same in regards to being targeted provision for those in greatest need.