

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

MINUTES of a meeting of the Cabinet held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Monday, 16 April 2007.

PRESENT: Mr P B Carter (Chairman), Mr N J D Chard, Mr K A Ferrin, MBE, Mr G K Gibbens, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr A J King, MBE, Mr K G Lynes, Mr J D Simmonds and Dr T R Robinson

ALSO PRESENT: Mr R L H Long, TD

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr P Gilroy (Chief Executive), Mr G Badman (Managing Director of Children, Families and Education), Ms A Honey (Managing Director Communities), Mr O Mills (Managing Director - Adult Social Services), Ms L McMullan (Director of Finance), Ms M Peachey (Kent Director Of Public Health) and Mr P Raine, Managing Director for Regeneration and Environment

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 March 2007
(Item. 1)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2007 were agreed as a true record.

2. Revenue and Capital Budgets, Key Activity and Risk Monitoring
(Item. 2 - Report by Mr Nick Chard, Cabinet Member for Finance, and Lynda McMullan, Director of Finance)

(1) Mr Chard said that the Revenue Budget continued to move in the right direction and that the outturn report would be submitted to Cabinet at its meeting in June. Whilst the Revenue Budget showed a £2.7m overspend on asylum costs, there was in fact a reserve for that. Mr Chard said he wanted to look at the way in which information on asylum costs was presented to Cabinet in future and this was agreed. With regard to the Capital Programme, the review which had been undertaken, indicated that 85% of the slippage related to some 15 major schemes. Where schemes were self funding or awaiting planning permission that did not affect the treasury management of the authority.

(2) Lynda McMullan said that the projected outturn on the Revenue Budget demonstrated how well the County Council had managed its budget. The work on reviewing the slippage within the Capital Programme was nearly complete and actions would be put in place to ensure that there was enhanced clarity around how large capital projects were managed and reported. These proposals would be discussed with the Budget Informal Member Group. Mr Badman said that he had concerns regarding proposals detailed in the current Government consultation on the future of the Dedicated Schools Grant and the future degree of flexibility which authorities may have in how that money was spent. He said this was something which Cabinet should discuss at a future meeting and this was agreed.

(3) Mr Gilroy said that consideration should be given as to how the County

Council in future formats its budget profile and said that budget monitoring should include more transparency around the Council's income. This was agreed. Mr Carter said that despite a number of challenges, the County Council's budget position was better than most within the South-East and he placed on record his congratulations to all concerned for what had been achieved during a difficult year.

(4) Cabinet noted the latest forecast revenue and budget monitoring position for 2006/07.

3. Select Committee: PSHE/Children's Health

(Item. 3 - Report of the Select Committee and covering report by Mr Graham Gibbens, Cabinet Member for Public Health, Dr Tony Robinson, Cabinet Member for Children and Family Services and Mr John Simmonds, Cabinet Member for Education and School Improvement)

(Ms Jane Cribbon, Chairman of the Select Committee and Mr Roland Tolputt were present for this item)

(1) This report considered the findings of the Select Committee established by the Children, Families and Education Policy Overview Committee to look at the issue of children's health, focussing in particular on aspects of Personal, Social and Health Education.

(2) Ms Cribbon paid thanks to her fellow Members of the Committee and also to the officers who had supported it in its work. She also paid thanks to the professionals who had given the Committee their advice and guidance. Ms Cribbon commended the recommendations of the Select Committee in full and hoped that they would be implemented within the recommended timescales. She said that the approach of the Select Committee had been to provide young people who are considering embarking on sexual relationships with timely guidance which was based on good quality education and information aimed at helping young people make informed choices. Young people themselves are asking to be provided with good quality PHSE advice but wanted that to be provided in a straight forward, uncomplicated and practical way and at an early stage. Ms Cribbon said that the Dutch model described within the Select Committee's report showed what could be achieved and what we should be working towards.

(3) Mr Tolputt also extended his thanks to officers. He said that the current situation with PHSE in Kent was unacceptable. Access to clinics needed to be improved and they had to be opened at times when they could be readily accessed by young people. There was a lack of sex education in most secondary schools and young people were being failed by parents and others in authority who were not providing them with good quality sex education so they could make informed choices. He also spoke about the UK rate of teenage pregnancies being the highest in Europe and work being undertaken on the Isle of Wight which demonstrated what could be done to reduce the rate of teenage pregnancies. Mr Tolputt commended the viewing of the video "Let's Talk Sex" from Channel 4 which reflected much of what the Select Committee found during the course of its work. He also spoke about the financial costs of teenage pregnancies and the range of state benefits which teenage mothers can receive in terms of housing benefit, council tax benefit, child allowance and social security.

(4) The main cost to KCC of the Select Committee's proposals would be to implement courses for PSHE teachers, but a consequent reduction in teenage pregnancies would make that self financing in the medium term. In his conclusions, Mr Tolputt urged the County Council to press Government to make PSHE a core part of the curriculum. He said he had spoken with several senior teachers, youth fora and local magistrates and they all supported the Select Committee's proposals and recommendations, and he commended them to the Cabinet for its support and endorsement.

(5) Ms Cribbon read a statement from Mrs Featherstone in which she supported and endorsed the recommendations put forward by the Select Committee. Parents found it hard to talk to their children about sex education and therefore there was a clear responsibility on schools to give accurate and timely information. Giving young people sound advice on relationships and sex education not only secured better health but also provided the foundation for future families. Mrs Featherstone hoped there would be an improvement in the provision of relationship and sex education and that the skills of professionals working in this area would be better appreciated and valued.

(6) In concluding, Ms Cribbon recommended the Channel 4 video "Let's Talk Sex" should be seen by Members as it set out the issues which the Select Committee had been looking at very clearly. On that point, Mr Carter said that he would arrange for extracts for the video to be shown when the County Council considered the Select Committee's report.

(7) Mr Badman said that the report was timely and it highlighted many of the problems being experienced in society when dealing with the issue of sex education. He spoke about the inter-agency work which was being undertaken within this field and said that he took seriously the recommendations which the Select Committee was putting forward. A Parenting handbook had now been published and this complemented and gave emphasis to the findings of the Select Committee, especially around the role of parents and professionals in the teaching of sex education. Meradin Peachey also said she welcomed the report and its recommendations. She particularly welcomed the emphasis placed by the Select Committee on the work being undertaken in schools and the role that they have in helping to raise awareness and provide sound advice and guidance.

(8) Mr Gilroy said that much of the advice given to young people relied on the assumption that parents and teachers are naturally competent to give such advice. It was also important for those advising on sex education matters to be more dynamic and interactive with the media when it came to promoting health and sex education matters. He also supported the adoption of the Dutch model for the teaching of sex education.

(9) Cabinet welcomed the report and supported its recommendations. Members particularly emphasised the important role which parents have in the teaching of sex education. In particular, Mr Simmonds said whilst professionals in the fields of education and health have their part to play, parents had to play their part just as much and there should be more focus and support around that fact. Mr Simmonds also spoke about a study being undertaken in two of Kent's most deprived areas. He confirmed as part of that study an assessment was being undertaken of the housing issues and whether housing benefits led to there being perverse incentives which in turn added to the number of teenage pregnancies.

(10) In concluding the discussion, Mr Carter said that he welcomed the findings of the Select Committee and supported the views which had been expressed by Cabinet Members. In taking this matter forward he recommended the report should be considered at the special meeting of the County Council taking place in July specifically to discuss health issues. The opportunity would also be taken at that meeting to show the Channel 4 video. In the meantime, Cabinet would consider further the findings of the Select Committee with the possibility of it putting forward some of its own suggestions and proposals.

4. Equality Strategy 2007 - 2010

(Item. 4 - Report by Mr Paul Carter, Leader of the Council, Mr Oliver Mills, Managing Director, Adult Social Services)

**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
RECORD OF CABINET DECISION**



**DECISION
TAKEN ON**

Cabinet
16 April 2007

DECISION NO.
07/00977

Equality Strategy 2007-2010

(Item 4 – Report by Mr Paul Carter, Leader of the Council, Mr Oliver Mills, Managing Director, Adult Social Services)

(1) Mr Mills said that the Equality Strategy 2007-2010 aimed to support continuous improvement in service delivery across all areas of the Council, with a greater focus on meeting the needs of diverse service users. The Strategy combined a range of initiatives into one strategic document and identified five priority outcomes, which support the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy Statement. Over the next six months the Council was committed to ongoing developmental work on the Strategy with those who live and work in Kent, to explore the issues highlighted through consultation in greater detail, and to identify appropriate responses and take forward key actions.

(2) Mr Lynes said that in terms of its community leadership role KCC needed to give a lead in this area of work and make aspirations a reality. He said the Equality Strategy distilled this wide ranging area of work down to five key statements which succinctly described the Council's overall ambitions for equality and provided a framework for delivering and managing its services.

(3) In commending the report to Cabinet, Mr Carter said that equality issues very much related to KCC as an employer and he would ask the Director of Personnel and Development to bring a report to the next meeting of the Personnel Committee focussing on the issue of gender discrimination.

(4) Mr Carter then proposed to Cabinet that the recommendation in paragraph 5(b) of the report be reworded so as to read 'that the Managing Director for Kent Adult Social Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council be authorised to approve any minor amendments to the Strategy or Summary Action Plans indicated between now and 30 April 2007'. This was agreed.

(5) Cabinet agreed:-

- (a) the Equality Strategy 2007/2010 and Summary Action Plans as detailed in the report;
- (b) the Managing Director for Kent Adult Social Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council be authorised to approve any minor amendments to the Strategy or Summary Action Plans indicated between now and 30 April 2007;and
- (c) noted that engagement with service users on this Strategy would continue over the next six months, to inform a review at the end of the year.

The reasons for this decision are set out above and in the Cabinet report.

Background documents: None

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signed (Chief Executive)

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date

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Decision Referred

Cabinet Scrutiny Decision

Reconsideration

Reconsideratio

to Cabinet Scrutiny			
YES		NO	

to Refer Back for Reconsideration			
YES		NO	

Record Sheet Issued			
YES		NO	

Number of Decision Published

5. Directorate Business Plans - 2007/08

(Item 5 - Report by Mr Alex King, Deputy Leader and Mr Peter Gilroy, Chief Executive)

**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
RECORD OF CABINET DECISION**



**DECISION
TAKEN ON**

Cabinet 16 April 2007

DECISION NO. 07/00926

Directorate Business Plans – 2007-08

(Item 5 – Report by Mr Alex King, Deputy Leader and Mr Peter Gilroy, Chief Executive)

(1) The Business Plans identify Medium Term priorities and goals within the County Council’s directorates and also include the 2007-08 Annual Plans for individual units. Business Plans represent the operation of the County Council services within the context of its policy framework and underpins its Medium Term plan and budget as approved by the Council on 22 February 2007.

(2) Cabinet agreed the Business Plans for 2007-08.

Background documents: None

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signed (Chief Executive)

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date

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Decision Referred to Cabinet Scrutiny			
YES		NO	

Cabinet Scrutiny Decision to Refer Back for Reconsideration			
YES		NO	

Reconsideration Record Sheet Issued			
YES		NO	

Reconsideration of Decision Published

6. Kent TV

(Item. 6 - Report by Mr Paul Carter, Leader of the Council, and Mr Peter Gilroy, Chief Executive)

(Tanya Oliver, Head of the Strategic Development Unit was present for this item)

**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
RECORD OF CABINET DECISION**



**DECISION
TAKEN ON**

Cabinet
16 April 2007

DECISION NO.
07/00978

Kent TV

*(Item 6 – Report by Mr Paul Carter, Leader of the Council, and Mr Peter Gilroy, Chief Executive)
(Tanya Oliver, Head of the Strategic Development Unit was present for this item)*

(1) Tanya Oliver said that the establishment of Kent TV was a natural step forward in communication and providing information in a modern and contemporary way. A rigorous tender process had been undertaken and it was expected that an announcement on the preferred provider would be made in the very near future. Mr Gilroy said that the establishment of Kent TV would fit with the County Council's powers under the Communications Act 2003 as well as promoting well being and the community leadership role set out in the Local Government Act 2000. In addition, the Government's White Paper "A New Future for Communications" trails new legislation aimed at encouraging and enabling local authorities to provide information services via TV and radio. The spread of digital technology was rapidly increasing and the County Council should maximise the potential this offers for transforming how it communicates and how it can raise the profile of Kent locally, nationally and internationally.

(2) Mr Lynes said that he was very supportive of this important initiative which through the use of modern technology would allow the County Council to increase the ways in which it provided and communicated its services to Kent residents. This view was echoed by Mr Chard and Mr Ferrin who said that this would not be a replacement but an additional strand to the way the County Council effectively communicates with the residents of Kent and beyond.

(3) Mr Carter said that he welcomed this innovative initiative and supported the use of new technologies in increasing the number of ways in which a major local authority, such as KCC, communicates with residents. In commending the recommendations of the report to Cabinet, Mr Carter proposed, and it was agreed, that the recommendation in paragraph 5(2) be amended so as to read 'delegate to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, authority to approve the appointment of the provider company'. Cabinet also agreed to adding an additional recommendation to read 'subject to him being satisfied as to the detailed terms and conditions, the Chief Executive be authorised to enter into an appropriate contract on behalf of the County Council with the approved provider'.

Kent TV Cont'd

(4) Cabinet agreed:-

- (a) to the implementation of the Kent TV pilot as detailed in the Cabinet report;
- (b) to delegate to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, authority to approve the appointment of the provider company; and
- (c) subject to him being satisfied as to the detailed terms and conditions, the Chief Executive be authorised to enter into an appropriate contract on behalf of the County Council with the approved provider.

The reasons for this decision are set out above and in the Cabinet report.

Background documents: None

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 signed (Chief Executive)

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 date

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Decision Referred to Cabinet Scrutiny			
YES		NO	

Cabinet Scrutiny Decision to Refer Back for Reconsideration			
YES		NO	

Reconsideration Record Sheet Issued			
YES		NO	

Reconsideration of Decision Published

7. Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme Operating Plan
(Item. 7 - Report by Mr Keith Ferrin, Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste, and Mr Pete Raine, Director of Environment and Regeneration)

**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
 RECORD OF CABINET DECISION**



**DECISION
 TAKEN ON**

Cabinet 16 April 2007

DECISION NO. 07/00933

Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme Operating Plan

(Item 7 – Report by Mr Keith Ferrin, Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste, and Mr Pete Raine, Director of Environment and Regeneration)

(1) This report detailed the Council’s current position with regard to the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme. This Scheme was introduced under the Waste Emissions Trading Act 2003 and the Operating Plan, addresses the practical issues concerning the Council’s ability to act decisively to maximise income. The Plan described the current state of the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme and set out how the Council would position itself to gain maximum benefit in this developing market.

- (2) Cabinet agreed that:-
- (a) the Landfill Allowance Operating Plan as detailed in the Cabinet report be approved;
 - (b) the Director of Finance and the Director of Environment and Regeneration together be authorised to enter into future Landfill Allowance Trading agreements; and
 - (c) the single ‘trade’ which has occurred, be noted.

The reasons for this decision are set out above and in the Cabinet report.

Background documents: None

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signed (Chief Executive)

date

April 2007

FOR COUNCIL SECRETARIAT USE ONLY

Decision Referred to Cabinet Scrutiny				Cabinet Scrutiny Decision to Refer Back for Reconsideration				Reconsideration Record Sheet Issued				Reconsideration of Decision Published	
YES		NO		YES		NO		YES		NO			

8. Cabinet Scrutiny and Policy Overview

(Item. 8 - Report by Mr Peter Gilroy, Chief Executive)

This report summarised the outcomes and progress on matters arising from the meeting of the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee held on 21 March 2007. The report also set out the agreed programme and current status of each Topic Review as agreed by the Policy Overview Co-ordinating Committee.