

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Adult Social Services Policy Overview Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 4 July 2007.

PRESENT: Mr M C Dance (Chairman), Mrs A D Allen, Mr M J Angell, Ms C J Cribbon, Mr J Curwood, Mrs E Green, Mr C Hibberd, Mr D A Hirst, Mr R E King, Mr P W A Lake, Mrs M Newell, Mr M J Northey, Mrs E D Rowbotham and Mr D S Daley (Substitute for Mr S J G Koowaree)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr O Mills (Managing Director - Adult Social Services), Mr S Leidecker (Director of Operations) and Miss T Grayell (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

17. Membership

The Democratic Services Officer reported that Ms C J Cribbon had joined the Committee in place of Mr L Christie. Ms Cribbon was duly welcomed.

18. Election of Vice-Chairman

Mrs M Newell proposed and Mrs E Green seconded that Ms C J Cribbon be elected Vice-Chairman of the Committee.

Agreed without a vote

19. Minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2007

(Item A4)

RESOLVED that, subject to the addition of the words "... a week..." after "The £15 . . ." in the third bullet point under paragraph (3) of Minute 14, the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2007 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

20. Declarations of Interest

(Item A5)

21. Chairman's Announcements

(Item A6)

The Chairman announced that the Committee had changed its name to reflect the names of the Directorate and the Cabinet portfolio, and would now be called the Adult Social Services Policy Overview Committee.

22. Director's Update - Supporting Update

(Item A7)

(1) Mr Mills reported that the consultation on the Older Person's Review was completed on 1 June. The results will be collated and analysed before being discussed by the officer group made up of the partners (KCC, PCTs, District and Borough Councils, Probation, etc) at the end of July. A report would then be prepared for a meeting of the Supporting People Commissioning Body on 10 September, at which meeting decisions would be taken. A copy of the report would then be made available to all County Members. Mr Mills proposed, and the Committee agreed, that Members receive six monthly reports on the progress of the Supporting People Programme, with a report being submitted to the next meeting.

(2) In response to a query from Mrs Newell, Mr Mills explained that holding back money against future shortages was considered the best way forward to ensure that services could be maintained. The current £5m reserve, which had been achieved by under-spends in previous years, would be exhausted by the year 2011 on current assumptions. All Supporting People services would be kept under review by the Commissioning Body to ensure best value for money in delivering the five year strategy. Mr Mills explained that the previous review of floating support had seen a shift in funding from West to East Kent and that this difficult decision had been taken to deliver services to meet need from the inherited position in 2003. when the programme began.

23. Kent Adult Social Services Performance - Year Ending March 2007 (including the Kent Agreement)

(Item B1)

(1) Mr Mills and Ms Abbott introduced the report and they and Mr Leidecker answered questions from Members. In their presentation, officers highlighted the following points:

- (a) KASS's performance was very good overall, with very few scores in low bands.
- (b) Some performance indicators/definitions were now out of date/inappropriate/considered flawed as they had not kept pace with the way in which services were delivered. KASS was actively lobbying for performance indicators to be updated when CSCI reviewed the system nationally in 2008/9.
- (c) Ongoing monitoring and review of all contracted-out services was robust, to ensure that these services met the same performance criteria.
- (d) KASS always made sure that CSCI was aware of Kent's good practice as some of the flawed and out of date performance indicators do not adequately show it up.

(2) Members made the following comments:

- (a) Members suggested that it would be helpful for future reports on performance indicators to show a target or expectation alongside the actual performance achieved.
 - (b) Members acknowledged the huge workload which was behind a performance indicator score. Performance indicators were very simplistic and gave no background or explanation to the way a service was delivered. However, Members appreciated that some system of performance indication was needed as a way for Members and the public to measure service delivery.
 - (c) Members reiterated the desire to have a presentation on the Brighter Futures Initiative at a future meeting of the POC, if this was not possible to arrange for a future meeting of the County Council.
- (3) RESOLVED that Members' comments, listed in paragraph (2) above, be noted.

24. Equality Strategy

(Item B2)

- (1) Mr Mills and Mr Wyncoll introduced the report and they and Mr Leidecker answered questions from Members. They explained that the Equality Strategy was being reported to all POCs so Members would have the opportunity to comment on its content and contribute to its future direction. Mr Mills explained that the aim of the strategy was to bring all threads of the Council's Equality Policy – including the race, gender and disability equality scheme - into one document, and that Kent was a pioneer in the UK as one of the first three authorities to do this.
- (2) In discussion, Members made the following comments:
- (a) Members welcomed the excellent document, praised its clarity and said that it stood out from others in the field. They welcomed the move to bring all three Equality Policies together.
 - (b) Members expressed disappointment that they had not had the chance to comment earlier (before it was seen by the Cabinet) on the content of the strategy. Mr Mills commented that this would have been desirable but had simply not proved possible given the tight preparation deadlines of the three strategies. However the strategy is essentially a work in progress and so will be kept under review during the year.
 - (c) Members were pleased that the new Public Health Strategy for the county would address mental health issues for Kent staff. The profile of mental health issues would also be raised by the new Mental Health Trust and the appointment of its Chief Executive and Commissioning Officer.
 - (d) Members noted that KASS had a good system of "supervision" for staff needing support through times of work/home stress.

- (e) Supported employment of young people with learning difficulties should be boosted by using the recommendations of the recent Transitional Arrangements Select Committee.
- (f) The application of the document would prove its worth!
- (g) Members commented that the document should include more to address the needs of “white working class deprived”, for example, their need to compete with migrant workers for the lowest paid employment. The pattern of migration was constantly changing so this issue would need ongoing review to monitor the impact of migration upon this part of the indigenous population.

(3) RESOLVED that Members’ comments, set out in paragraph (2) above, be taken into account in the future development of the Equalities Strategy Document.

25. CPA - Corporate Assessment Briefing

(Item B3)

(1) Mr Mills and Mr Sherlock introduced the report and set out the future process for the Corporate Assessment. KASS was aiming for a Level 3 target, and Mr Mills said he was confident that the Directorate’s plans were coherent and targets meaningful, to help keep Kent as a 4-Star ‘Excellent’ Authority.

(2) In discussion, Members made the following comments:

- (a) Members heartily supported KASS’s commitment to retain its 4-Star status.
- (b) The recommendations of the recent Transitional Arrangements Select Committee should be included as part of the review, but were not mentioned.
- (c) Local Members would need regular updates on elements of the CPA which affected their area, and would need to be involved in the assessment alongside local officer teams. Members asked that they be advised when they might need to become involved.

(3) RESOLVED that the report be noted and Members’ comments, set out in paragraph (2) above, be taken into account.

26. Update on Select Committee Work

(Item C1)

(1) The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report and highlighted the recent successes achieved by the Gypsy and Traveller sites and Transitional Arrangements Select Committee. Good progress against the Gypsy and Traveller Sites Select Committee’s recommendations was an example of successful joint working between the County and Borough/District Councils. Mr P W A Lake

emphasised the need for transit sites in Kent to be developed as a priority and asked that the Select Committee focus on this issue at its November meeting.

(2) Mr M J Angell asked all present to pass to him, the Chairman or the Cabinet Member any suggestions for future Select Committee and topic review work.

(3) RESOLVED that it be noted:

- (a) that the Carers in Kent Select Committee would hold its evidence-gathering hearings in July and August, with the final report being shared with the Cabinet Member on 6 November, and considered by the Cabinet on 3 December and fully County Council on 13 December 2007.
- (b) that the report of the Transitional Arrangements Select Committee, "Transition to a Positive Future", was warmly welcomed and supported by the Cabinet on 14 May 2007, and that an Informal Member Group would undertake a piece of focussed work around some of the key issues raised by the Select Committee, to be reported to the fully County Council in Autumn 2007; and
- (c) that the Select Committee on Gypsy and Traveller Sites re-convened on 31 May 2007 to receive a report from officers on progress made against each of its recommendations, and will meet again in late November 2007 to review progress against those recommendations on which it had not been possible to make any progress thus far. This meeting should focus on the need to develop Transit Sites in Kent as a priority.