

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

MINUTES of a meeting of the Cabinet held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Monday, 23 May 2011.

PRESENT: Mr P B Carter (Chairman), Mr A J King, MBE, Mr G K Gibbens, Mr R W Gough, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mrs S V Hohler, Mr K G Lynes, Mr J D Simmonds, Mr B J Sweetland Mrs J Whittle

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms K Kerswell (Managing Director), Mr M Austerberry (Executive Director, Environment, Highways and Waste), Mr D Cockburn (Corporate Director of Business and Support), Ms A Honey (Corporate Director, Customer and Communities), Mr M Newsam (Interim Corporate Director of Families and Social Care), Ms M Peachey (Kent Director Of Public Health), Mr A Roberts (Interim Corporate Director Education Learning and Skills), Mr G Wild (Director of Governance and Law) Mr A Wood (Acting Director of Finance)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

28. Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 April 2011

(Item 3)

Resolved that the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 April 2011 be agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

29. Revenue & Capital Budget Monitoring Exception Report 2010-11

(Item 4– report by Mr John Simmonds – cabinet member for Finance and Mr Andy Wood, Acting Corporate Director, Finance and Procurement)

(1) Mr Simmonds highlighted the main areas of pressure within individual portfolios and said despite these pressures each Directorate was reporting a small under spend which reflected well on their good management. Mr Simmonds also reported on the current position with the Capital budget and the re phasing of some projects. Mrs Whittle referred to Paragraph 2.6.4 of the report and said the rise in legal costs associated with children's support services was indicative of an increase in the number of Looked after Children court cases and the courts dealing with a back log of cases.

(2) Mr Carter said that good progress continued to be made on securing payment from Government of the Council's Asylum costs and the forecast now reflected this. The Council would now be writing to the UK Border Agency stating that it would be monitoring the number of All Rights Exhausted clients to ensure the associated costs did not fall on the Council.

(3) Following discussion Cabinet **Resolved that:**

(i) the latest forecast revenue and capital budget monitoring position for 2010-11 be noted.

(ii) the creation of two new earmarked reserves within KASS be agreed , as detailed in paragraph 2.7.5 of the Cabinet report. A contribution of £0.2m to each of these reserves was reflected in the outturn projection reported in table 1 of the Cabinet report.

(iii) the creation of a new earmarked reserve from the under spending in the Youth Centres be agreed and used to pilot some commissioned services in advance of the project plan profile included in the MTFP for the creation of a predominately commissioned model of service delivery for the Youth Service. A contribution to that reserve of just under £0.500m was already reflected in the outturn projection reported in table 1 of the Cabinet report.

(iii) a virement of £0.4m be agreed from the under spending on the debt charges budget within the Finance portfolio to the Highways budget in the Environment, Highways & Waste portfolio, to contribute towards the costs of the snow emergencies in order to preserve the balance in the Emergency Conditions reserve for future emergencies.

(iv) the changes to the capital programme be noted; and,

(v) that £20.703m of re-phasing on the capital programme be moved from 2010-11 capital cash limits to future years.

30. Annual Public Health Report

(Item 5– report by Mr Graham Gibbens, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health and Ms M Peachey (Director of Public Health)) Mr B Sweetland made a personal declaration of interest in that he is a non executive Director of Kent Community Health NHS Trust).

(1) Mr Gibbens said the Annual Public Health report was an opportunity for the Director of Public Health to report on the health of the Kent population. The 2009/10 report had focussed on two issues, Dementia and Excess Winter Deaths and its findings showed where significant changes needed to be made to improve health and the quality of health services.

(2) During the course of discussion members spoke of the importance of having robust public health policies and the need to continue working in partnership with other agencies to tackle public health issues such as those identified in the report.

(3) Cabinet resolved to note the report and the actions that needed to be taken.

31. KCC's Workforce Strategy for Children's Social Services (To follow)

(Item 6– report by Mrs J Whittle, Cabinet Member for Children's Specialist Services and Mr Malcolm Newsam, Interim Corporate Director for Families and Social Care) (Amanda Beer the Corporate Director for Human Resources was present for this item) (this report was taken at the same time as item 9 on the agenda)

The Chairman declared consideration of this item to be urgent on the grounds that decisions related to the important matters detailed in the report needed to be taken at this meeting and could not reasonably be delayed as the County Council needed to have in place as soon as possible a robust recruitment and retention package as part of the Improvement Plan for Children's Social Services. Additional information was circulated at the meeting related to the recruitment campaign and the proposals for Social Worker Pay.

(1) As part of the County Council's response to the Improvement Notice issued by the Secretary of State in respect of Children's Social Care Services this report provided an analysis of current staffing levels, a recruitment plan for the next three years, an update on actions taken so far in achieving this priority and recommendations for the components needed to ensure a compelling offer was made to attract new and retain existing high quality social care staff. Mrs Whittle said that the Improvement Plan had now been approved by the Improvement Board and the Children Services Improvement Panel had now met with the minutes of those meetings in future being reported to meetings of the Cabinet for information. The Workforce Strategy was therefore an important plank in the Council's commitment to addressing that part of the Improvement Plan aimed at ensuring there is sufficient capacity and capability within children's social care and action is taken to improve retention and stability of the workforce. Mrs Whittle also placed on record her thanks to all of KCC's social workers involved in this work for their ongoing commitment and professionalism. Mr Newsam said the peripatetic team was now beginning to undertake its duties and he also placed on record his thanks to KCC social services staff for their dedication and commitment.

(2) Following further discussion Cabinet resolved:

(i) to note the content of the report and endorsed the steps being taken to make KCC the Employer of Choice for children's social workers; and,

(ii) delegated the approval of the final changes to the remuneration of children's social workers to the Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services following engagement with staff and managers in the service.

32. Involving the Whole Community: The Kent Approach to Literacy and Reading

(Item 7 - report by Mr Michael Hill, Cabinet Member for Customer and Communities and Ms Amanda Honey, Corporate Director, Customer and Communities) (Mrs G Bromley, Strategic Manager for Libraries and Archives was present for this item)

(1) Mr Hill said the Kent Approach to Literacy and Reading did not seek to advise on how literacy should be taught but to support those whose role it was to develop literacy skills and promote the enjoyment of reading. Mrs Bromley said the ultimate twin goals of the strategy were to improve standards of literacy and to engender a love of reading. In addition Literacy was essential to the achievement of all three ambitions of Bold Steps for Kent.

(2) Cabinet **Resolved** to note the report and also noted that further investment opportunities would be explored including sponsorship for high profile promotional

events and seed corn funding to test different approaches to engage audiences and attract new partners.

33. Appointment of 'Preferred Bidder' on new Kent Highway Services Contract

(Item 8 - report by , Mr Bryan Sweetland Cabinet member for Environment, Highways and Waste and Mr Mike Austerberry Corporate Director for Enterprise and Environment) (Mr J Burr Director of Kent Highway Services was present for this item)

See Record of Decision on page 5.

34. Putting Children First: Kent's Safeguarding and Looked After Children Improvement Plan

(Item 9– report by Mrs Jenny Whittle, Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services and Mr Malcolm Newsam Interim Director of Families and Social Care)

(this report was taken at the same time as item 6 on the agenda)

(1) The governance arrangements for children's social care improvement were approved by the County Council at its meeting on 6 April 2011. The Kent Improvement Board, which has an independent chair signed off the Improvement Plan at its April meeting and the Plan was subsequently sent to all Members of the County Council. The County Council has also agreed to establish a Children's Services Improvement Panel which is an informal Member group that will support the Families & Social Care Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee by offering challenge and overseeing the monitoring of progress. The Panel would in turn be supported by the Corporate Parenting Panel and the Staff Advisory Group.

(2) Following discussion and further to the endorsement of the Kent Safeguarding and Looked After Children Improvement Plan, Cabinet Resolved to note the progress that has been made.

35. Follow up Items and Decisions from Cabinet Scrutiny Committee - 28 March 2011

(Item 10 – report Alex King – Deputy Leader and Mr Peter Sass - Head of Democratic Services) (Mr Peter Sass was present for this item)

Resolved that the comments and actions detailed in the report be noted.

36. Record of Decisions

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

DECISION TAKEN BY Cabinet 23 May 2011	DECISION NO. 10/01586
Unrestricted	
Subject: Appointment of Preferred Bidder on new Kent Highway Services Contract	
Summary: (1) This report provided an overview of the extensive and robust procurement process that had been undertaken over the past 13 months and sought the support of Cabinet support in approving Enterprise as Kent Highway Services 'Preferred Bidder' and that the Corporate Director of Enterprise and Environment and the Director of Governance & Law be authorised on behalf of the County Council to enter into the contract with the 'Preferred Bidder'. (2) Mr J Burr Director of Kent Highway Services explained the procurement process and the key elements of the tender specification. The new contract would provide the County Council with more flexibility and value for money than the previous contract and the new contractor would be taking more responsibility and risk for meeting targets and standards. The new contractor and would also be paying the County Council a commercial rate for the use of its Highways Depots and be playing an important part in supporting the Council's Apprenticeship Scheme. Mr Carter said this contract marked a new approach to providing highway services to improved standards and he welcomed the fact the preferred bidder would be working with the Council on matters related to staff development and training. Decision : Cabinet resolved (i) that for the reasons described in the Cabinet report Enterprise should be appointed the 'Preferred Bidder' for the provision of the new Kent Highway Services Contract to Kent County Council; and, (ii) Subject to them being satisfied as to the detailed terms and conditions, the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Environment and the Director of Governance & Law be authorised on behalf of the County Council to enter into a contract with the Enterprise as the Preferred Bidder on the new Kent Highway Services contract.	
Any Interest Declared when the Decision was Taken Mr Sweetland made a declaration of personal interest as a distant relative was an employee of Talent – a traffic light contractor.	
Reason(s) for decision, including alternatives considered and any additional information As set above and in the Cabinet report	
Background Documents: none	