

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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### COMMUNITIES POLICY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Communities Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 5 April 2011.

PRESENT: Mrs E M Tweed (Chairman), Mr R B Burgess, Mr I S Chittenden, Mr G Cowan, Mr H J Craske, Mrs J P Law, Mr J M Ozog, Mr R Tolputt, Mr M A Wickham Mr A T Willicombe

ALSO PRESENT: Mr P M Hill, OBE Mr A Sandhu, MBE

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr N Baker (Head of Kent Youth Service), Mr D Crilley (Director of Customer Services), Ms D Fitch (Assistant Democratic Services Manager (Policy Overview)), Mrs S Garton (County Performance and Evaluation Manager), Ms A Honey (Corporate Director, Customer and Communities), Mr M Scrivener (Business Information Manager), Ms A Slaven (Director of Service Improvement), Mr K Tilson (Head of Finance for Policy and Resources) Mr J White (Capital Project Officer)

#### UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

##### **102. Membership**

*(Item A2)*

It was noted that Mr G Cowan had replaced Mr D Hirst as a Member of the Committee.

##### **103. Minutes - 11 January 2011**

*(Item A5)*

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2011 are correctly recorded and that they signed by the Chairman.

##### **104. Portfolio Holder and Managing Director's Update**

*(Item B1)*

(1) Mr Hill and Ms Honey updated Members on the issues listed in the paper circulated with the agenda and answered questions from Members.

*Update on Radio Frequency ID roll out in the Libraries Service*

(1) Mr Hill explained that this self service system was being introduced into 30 ? of the busiest libraries. Work to tag 1.6 million items had started in January and was on course to be completed in June 2011. Much of the savings depended on this system and he was happy with way that the work was proceeding.

(2) In response to a question, Mr Crilley explained that they would stop at 30 libraries and assess the impact of the system. An update on the Radio Frequency ID roll out to the libraries would be submitted to the July meeting of the Committee.

*YOS case review inspection update*

(3) Ms Honey reported that there was a case review inspection due to start on 11 April 2011 which would focus on 85 Youth Service statutory intervention cases. Ms Slaven and her team had preparations well in hand and informal feedback from the inspection would be received in May 2011. An update would be submitted to this Committee on the feedback received in due course.

*Future Jobs Fund and apprenticeship update (including vulnerable learners)*

(4) Ms Honey gave an update on some of the initiatives including the Future Jobs Fund which had achieved its target of helping 890 long term unemployed into full time employment and had brought £5m into the Kent economy. In relation to apprenticeships, the Apprenticeships Strategy was being refreshed and would come to this Committee in due course. Regarding work with vulnerable learners, £0.5m of one off funding had been secured and the project was progressing well. The results of this project would be brought to a future meeting of this Committee. The Supporting Independence Team with partners had delivered 100 extra apprenticeships in 100 days in Canterbury which was a great achievement.

*Charity sleepover at Swattenden Youth Centre*

(5) Ms Honey explained that the Directorate liked to try to push boundaries and referred to an initiative organised by the Positive Action Co-ordinators, who had given 20 young people the opportunity to experience sleeping out over night like homeless people. This had been organised in February and the young people created their own shelters and stayed out on the street overnight, they had raised over £500 for charity.

*Update on Edenbridge building progress – there was a full report on this later in the meeting.*

*Arts Council Funding.*

(6) Ms Honey reported that there had been good news for Kent in relation to Arts Council funding for 2012. Kent would receive £4.5m funding from the Arts Council and a number of organisations would benefit including Turner Contemporary. She stated that Kent had received the largest allocation of funding available in the Region. As this was a transition year, officers were working with organisations affected by cuts in their funding from 2012. Ms Honey invited any Member who wanted information on how grants were affected in their areas to contact Mr Crilley.

*Visit of the Finns: signing of protocol*

(7) Mr Hill explained that on 12 January 2011 a revised protocol relating to the Youth Services and Education had been signed. He had been to Finland to visit the Duke of Edinburgh gold award exhibition last week.

*House of Commons Turner event*

(8) Mr Hill referred to Turner Contemporary which would be opening on 16 April 2011. There had been an event at the House of Commons which had been hosted by two Kent MP's which had gone well.

#### *Appointment to the Arts Council England Board*

(9) Mr Hill had been invited to put himself forward for a place on the Board of the Arts Council of South East England.

#### *Final of Young Consumers Competition*

(10) Mr Hill referred to this event which had been won by Chatham House Grammar School, Ramsgate.

#### *Annual Community Safety Conference*

(11) Mr Hill mentioned this Conference which had been an afternoon event rather than all day. There had been 11 speakers and it had been a very interesting event.

#### *Ashford Gateway Plus*

(12) Mr Hill informed the Committee that the topping out ceremony had been held on 25 January 2011. The building was on course to be opened in May 2011 with the public opening on 4 July 2011 and the launch of the Gateway on 7 October 2011.

#### *Topping out ceremony for Kent History and Archive Centre*

(13) Although a date had not yet been set for the topping out ceremony it would be sometime in 2012 and the development was progressing ahead of schedule. Mr Hill agreed to bring an update report to the Committee on the Kent History and Archive Centre included the safety aspects of accessing the site especially for pedestrians.

(14) RESOLVED that the update be noted

### **105. Financial Monitoring Report : Community Services 2010/11**

#### *(Item B2)*

(1) Mr Shipton explained that he and Mr Simmonds were attending all Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committees this cycle to set out the process for managing the delivery of the £95m of efficiency, policy and one-off savings included in the 2011/12 budget approved by County Council. For any savings over £200k the responsible manager was required to complete a Project Initiation Document (PID), which would be subject to detailed monitoring. Progress reports would be submitted to Cabinet alongside the normal budget monitoring report, and will also be presented to each Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee after they had been considered by Cabinet.

(2) The Cabinet Member and officer answered questions from members and noted comments which included the following:

- A Member suggested that the PID's should be circulated to Members as soon as they were available rather than waiting for the next cycle of meetings.
- In response to a question on how much it was costing to implement the savings, Mr Shipton replied that there was no additional cost as it was just an

addition to existing processes and would just require a re-prioritisation of officer time.

- As only £92m of the £95 savings were savings over £200k and were covered by PIDs it was asked what would happen to monitoring the remaining £3m of savings. Mr Shipton explained that these related to sums below £200k which would still be monitored but would not be part of the PID process.

(3) Mr Tilson introduced the third quarter budget monitoring report for 2010/11 which had been reported to the Cabinet on 4 April 2011 and the latest exception report.

(4) The Cabinet Member and officer answered questions from Members and noted comments which included the following:

- Mr Tilson informed Members that there had been no decision yet on rate relief for youth services premises but money had been set aside to cover this. If 80% rate relief was granted then this would generate an underspend.
- It was confirmed that the Coroner who had not been using Kent Scientific Services was now doing so. Mr Hill also reminded Members that the new full time Coroner was now in post.
- Regarding the Youth Opportunity Fund it was confirmed that money was available in 2011/12.
- Part of the Early Intervention Grant had come into the Directorate via Children's Services in relation to the previously ring-fenced Youth Opportunities Grant. Mr Baker, Head of Kent Youth Services, would be writing to all Youth Leaders to advise them of available funds.
- It was important to make sure that there was more promotion of the "Buy with Confidence" scheme.
- Mr Hill confirmed that no significant cuts would be made to voluntary organisations with regard to grant payments and that the small amount of money coming out of the budget had not been spent in-year. The youth service – as part of its vision for the future - was looking to commission work from the voluntary sector.
- Mr Hill updated Members on the Beane Library, the difficult work needed on the façade had increased the cost significantly but the good news was that £0.5m had been granted from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

(5) RESOLVED that the projected outturn figures (a significant underspend) for the directorate for 2010/11 based on the latest monitoring report to Cabinet be noted.

## **106. KCC's Performance Management Framework**

*(Item B3)*

(1) Mrs Garton introduced a paper which provided details of work underway to develop a clear, single Performance Management Framework for the authority with Bold Steps for Kent at its heart.

(2) RESOLVED that the approach being taken to provide a clear performance management framework for the authority be noted.

## **107. Core Monitoring**

*(Item B4)*

(1) Mr Scrivener introduced an extract from the third Core Monitoring report for 2010/11 which provided information about key areas of performance and activity within the Communities Directorate, covering the period October – December 2010. The full Core Monitoring report had been presented to Cabinet on 4 April 2011.

(2) In response to a question from a Member, Mr Crilley undertook to submit a report to the next meeting of the Committee on how many apprentices end up in employment

(3) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

## **108. Edenbridge update**

*(Item B5)*

(1) Mr Hill introduced a report on the work that had been undertaken to date on the Edenbridge Centre. The new Centre had been achieved following the resolution of a large number of problems by officers. It had been inevitable that there would be issues as the centre was to be built on green belt land. He congratulated officers on all the work that they had carried out to achieve this outcome.

(2) Mr White explained that the building would be completed by May 2011 and hopefully it would open shortly after that. Revenue funding and facilities management still had to be agreed and leases granted to, for example, the Citizens Advice Bureau. He stated that thanks were due to the local community and the town and District Councils for bringing this scheme together.

(2) Mr Chittenden requested that a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee on the revenue stream and contracts/conditions for the new building. It was agreed that an update on the scheme would be submitted to the Committee in due course.

(3) Reference was made to the recent meeting of the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee at Edenbridge which a large number of local people attended. The view was expressed that this had not been a very useful meeting, and had raised a number of issues with local people which were not relevant to the scheme. Officers undertook to supply Mrs Law with the cost of holding this meeting in Edenbridge.

RESOLVED that the report on the progress made to date on the project be noted.

## **109. Introduction to the Customer and Communities Directorate**

*(Item B6)*

(1) Ms Honey and Mr Hill gave a presentation which set out the new Customer and Communities Directorate structure and the responsibilities within the Cabinet Portfolio and Directorate. Both of the new Directors, and the interim Director, gave a brief overview of their new Directorate area. They answered questions from Members about the new Directorate.

(2) RESOLVED that the report and presentation be noted.

### **110. Select Committees - update**

*(Item C1)*

(1) The Committee received a report which updated them on the progress of the Select Committees on the Student Journey and Extended Services. It was noted that the action sheet for the recommendations from the Select Committee on Extended Services would be submitted to the July meeting of the Committee.

(2) Mr Burgess, the Chairman of the Select Committee on Extended Services, asked for a copy of the consultation that was currently being carried out regarding the extended services team.

(3) RESOLVED that the update be noted.

### **111. Exempt Item**

*(Item )*

RESOLVED that in accordance with section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 4 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

### **112. Youth Service Transformation**

*(Item D1)*

(1) Mr Baker introduced a paper which gave an outline of the Kent Youth Service Model for the Commissioning and Direct Delivery of youth work activities in Kent. It was anticipated that there would be a public and staff consultation starting in August 2011 following endorsement by Cabinet.

(2) RESOLVED that the report and the comments made by members of the Committee be noted.