

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES CABINET COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Communities Cabinet Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 19 September 2012.

PRESENT: Ms A Hohler (Chairman), Mr H J Craske (Vice-Chairman), Mr M J Angell, Mr R B Burgess, Mr C J Capon, MBE, Mr A R Chell, Mr I S Chittenden, Mr A D Crowther, Mrs E Green, Mr M J Northey, Mr A Sandhu, MBE and Mrs C J Waters

ALSO PRESENT: Mr P M Hill, OBE

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms C Anley (Head of Libraries, Registration and Archives), Mr M Burrows (Director of Communications & Engagement), Mr D Crilley (Director of Community Cultural Services), Ms D Fitch (Assistant Democratic Services Manager (Policy Overview)), Mr R Fitzgerald (Performance Manager), Grosskopf (Policy Manager), Mr C Hespe (Head of Culture and Sport Group), Ms A Honey (Corporate Director, Customer and Communities), Mr M Rolfe (Trading Standards Manager (East)), Ms E Sanderson (Strategic Business Advisor (Corporate & Communities)), Ms A Slaven (Director of Service Improvement), Mr C Smith (Operations Manager Contact Point), Mrs S Sparks (Strategic Manager), Mr K Tilson (Finance Business Partner - Customer & Communities) and Mr D Whittle (Head of Policy and Strategic Relationships)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

20. Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 July 2012

(Item A4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 6 July 2012 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

21. Portfolio Holder's and Corporate Director's update

(Item A5)

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

Troubled Families

(2) Ms Honey updated the Committee on the current situation regarding the Troubled Families programme. She stated that the focus over the summer had been on validating and cross referencing the data across all districts and partners. She expressed her gratitude to the Community Safety Partnerships for their assistance. Representatives from the Department of Local Government and Communities had visited Kent to hear about the delivery model and had been impressed by it. KCC had the third largest programme in the country aiming to work with 1082 families in

the current year. The DLGC were being realistic about the amount of time that it would take to turn the lives of these families around and accepted that this work would take some time to have an impact.

(3) Ms Honey explained that the priority this year was to ensure every one of these families had a full assessment of their needs. The four early adopter areas were Dartford, Thanet, Tunbridge Wells and Ashford. KCC was the accountable body for the Troubled Families programme but it was a team effort with partners and Districts. All agencies were looking at how they could transform their services to achieve better outcomes for these families.

(4) A Member mentioned that there had been a briefing on this programme at a recent meeting of the Kent Police Authority.

(5) A Member referred to the lack of a Locality Board in Thanet which was a pilot area for the Troubled Families programme and the possible impact that this could have on Members receiving feedback on the scheme. Mr Hill stated that 11 of the 12 Districts had Locality Boards and the target was that all 12 would be established by the end of the year. He undertook to make sure that Members were kept informed and consulted about the Troubled Families programme in their area.

Global Youth Camp

(6) Ms Honey referred to the Global Youth Camp that had been held in the summer. This was the second one organised by KCC and had been a huge success. 240 young people and their leaders from 14 countries, including South Korea had attended the week of activities to coincide with the Olympics.

(7) Ms Honey thanked Nigel Baker for the work that he had carried out to make the Global Youth Camp such a success.

Youth Service Transformation (Commissioning)

(8) Mr Hill informed the Committee that 52 organisations had submitted 221 bids for the commissioning of Youth Services across the County. He was very pleased with the response. An initial analysis of the bids had shown there to be a good spread of bids across the County and a mixture in the size of the organisations submitting bids, including some bids from social enterprises. There would be a report to the next meeting of the Committee to update Members on the commissioning of services.

The Beaney

(9) Mr Hill reported on the opening of the Beaney in Canterbury which had been joint project with Canterbury City Council. The majority of the funding had come from a Heritage Lottery Fund Grant and had resulted in a fitting building for the Library and Gallery in Canterbury.

(10) A local Member emphasised what a wonderful facility The Beaney was and encouraged Members to visit.

Broadstairs Library

11) Mr Hill Informed the Committee that the Broadstairs Library had re-opened recently. It had been a complicated project, which moved the majority of adult education provision into the new Library. At the opening there were many compliments from local residents about the huge improvements presented by the new building.

Funding Successes (Culture, Sports, etc)

(12) Ms Honey reported on the funding obtained for Kent by the Arts Development Unit/Sports Development Unit. This included £1.4m from the Arts Council England Creative people and places fund, which was a consortium led by KCC. £74k had been secured for a project to develop a programme across Kent to showcase the work being done in archives. £1.1m had been secured from Sports England to enable 26 community sports clubs to upgrade and refurbish their facilities.

(13) Officers undertook to supply Mr Sandhu with a list of where the £1.1m of sports funding that had been obtained for Districts was going to be used.

Olympics & Paralympics

(14) Mr Hill referred to the Olympic and Paralympic events across Kent including the Cultural Olympiad and the Olympic Torch Relay. The Paralympic Road Cycling at Brands Hatch had demonstrated what Kent was able to do. He stated that he would like to bring a full report on the Olympic campaign to a future meeting of the Committee.

(15) Members remarked on the excellent transport links from Kent to the Olympic Park and also the amount of the publicity for tourism in Kent along the route.

(16) The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, expressed thanks to Mr Hesse and his team for their work in relation to the Olympics and Paralympics.

(17) RESOLVED that the update, and any comments made by Members, be noted.

22. Customer & Communities Performance Dashboard

(Item C1)

(1) Mr Hill and Mr Fitzgerald introduced the Customer & Communities performance dashboard which provided members with progress against targets set in business plans for key performance and activity indicators. As agreed at the last meeting the Contact Centre and Trading Standards had been identified as areas for more in-depth consideration.

Performance Dashboard.

(2) Officers answered some questions and noted comments from Members in relation to the performance dashboard which included the following:

- The Performance Indicator for the number of deaths registered within 5 days (page 19) should be amended to appointments offered to register death within 5 days.
- Future Performance Dashboards include the number of marriages and other ceremonies carried out by KCC registration staff in non- KCC venues.
- Ms Slaven to clarify for Mr Chittenden the figure for the number of young people engaged with the Youth Service and achieving an accredited outcome (page 24)
- It was suggested that KDAAT could be the subject for a “deep dive” at a future meeting.
- It would be helpful to group indicators by service, indicating the different timescales for collecting performance data, rather than by timescale

Trading Standards

(3) Mr Rolfe circulated a bullet point note of key performance targets within the two primary areas of focus for the unit which were protecting the public from harm, and supporting and protecting legitimate Kent businesses.

(4) Mr Rolfe noted comments and answered questions from Members which included the following:

- Mr Rolfe undertook to remind Members that they could sign up for Trading Standards email alerts and to suggest that their Parish Councils also sign up for alerts. It was noted that organisations, such as Age UK, had signed up for Trading Standards alerts.
- Members commended the good work that Trading Standards carried out in relation to rogue traders and protecting vulnerable members of the community.
- The link between Community Wardens and Trading Standards was mentioned and Mr Rolfe referred to the valuable community intelligence that Community Wardens shared with Trading Standards.
- Members were impressed by the range of services provided by Trading Standards especially the support given to Kent businesses.
- In response to a question on the vacant posts in Trading Standards, Mr Rolfe explained that the service was currently being restructured and therefore the posts had been kept vacant, but that following the restructure it was intended that the unit would be fully staffed. A new post of Financial Investigator had been established to assist with the more complex financial elements of rogue trading. The restructure would affect the senior part of the unit i.e. managers and senior professional. It would generate efficiencies in back office support and would not affect the front line.

Contact Centre/Contact Point

(5) Mr Smith circulated a bullet point note which set out the key objectives to improve the performance of Contact Point. This included performance data for the

last three months, GovMetric feedback for August 2012 and the top 14 service calls to Contact Point for June to August 2012.

(6) Mr Crilley stated that they were engaged in a root and branch review of the Contact Centre in order to make sure it delivered for the next four to five years. This was an enormous opportunity to deliver savings in the future and give a better quality of service for our customers, which was a win-win situation.

(7) Mr Smith noted comments and answered questions from Members which included the following;

- In relation to the Contact Centre the indicator should include quality of customer experience and the outcome of calls, as well as the number of calls answered and time taken.
- Officers undertook to send information to Mr Capon on the income from the 0845 calls over the past 5 years and what this has been used for.
- It was agreed that there would be an item on Channel Shift to a future meeting (including a timetable for the new contact centre software).
- In relation to a suggestion that the public could be encouraged to email via the Contact Centre rather than phoning, Mr Smith explained that although use of email was an option it did take longer to respond to than a phone call. He believed the way forward was to encourage people to go onto the web and self-serve.
- Members mentioned the various ways in which the public could contact KCC. Ms Honey referred to the Customer Services Strategy, published in January 2012. Mr Smith emphasised the importance of making sure that information on the web was easy to find and that emails and letters had officer contact details on them, which would free up the telephone lines for those people who needed to speak to an advisor.

(8) Mr Smith issued an invitation to Members to visit the Contact Centre and spend time with an advisor to see the variety of calls that they received and the issues that they dealt with.

(9) RESOLVED that the comments made by Members on the Customer & Communities performance dashboard and on the “deep dives” be noted.

23. Customer & Communities Directorate & Portfolio Financial Monitoring 2012/13

(Item C2)

(1) Mr Hill and Mr Tilson introduced the regular report on the forecast outturn for the Customer & Communities Directorate and Portfolio.

(2) A Member asked what the implications were of the unsuccessful bid for funding for the Beaney. Mr Tilson explained that project costs had increased due to, among other things, archeological finds which had caused delays and pushed up costs because the specification had had to change to mitigate this. A bid had been made to Viridor to fund these additional costs, but it was recently confirmed that the bid had been unsuccessful. Despite requests, it was not possible to be informed of the reason for the bid being declined. To ensure the project was fully funded, an

unallocated capital receipt had been used to close the funding gap so there is no financial pressure. The progress/risk update was for Members' information only.

(3) Regarding the extension of time granted to the contractor for the Edenbridge Centre, Mr Tilson explained that the design and build contract was agreed at a fixed price and there was no financial risk for KCC. The contractor was currently directing his resources into the housing part of the project, which would lead to a delay in the opening of the Centre from when originally anticipated.

(4) RESOLVED that the first quarter's full budget monitoring report for 2012/13 for Customer and Communities as reported to Cabinet on 17 September 2012 be noted.

24. Budget Consultation 2013/14

(Item D1)

(1) Mr Hill and Mr Tilson introduced a report which updated the Cabinet Committee on the 2013/14 budget consultation launched on 6 September 2012. Mr Hill referred to the Informal Member Group which had been set up to discuss the Budget and which would feedback to the November meeting of the Committee.

(2) RESOLVED that the Budget consultation launched on 6th September and the engagement with Cabinet Committees, including feedback from the Informal Member Group at the November meeting be noted.

25. Future Library Services - update

(Item D2)

(1) Mr Hill and Ms Anley presented a report which updated members of the Committee on the latest developments in the Future Library Services transformation programme with case studies to demonstrate progress. The report set out the wider ambition for the transformation of these vital community services despite challenging financial pressures.

(2) Mr Hill, Ms Anley and Ms Sparks noted comments and answered questions from Members which included the following:

- A number of Members confirmed that the engagement at the local level via their Locality Boards was going well and that innovative ideas were being put forward. Ms Anley confirmed that she and Ms Sparks had attended Locality Board meetings to receive feedback and to take questions.
- Mrs Green mentioned the lack of a Locality Board for Thanet but stated that she was sure that there would be a lot of constructive suggestions from the community. Ms Sparks confirmed that she was working with the Vice Chairman designate of the Thanet Locality Board and it was hoped that there would be a meeting in the area to start off the consultation. Ms Sparks stated that she was happy to have individual conversations with Members as well.

- In relation to a question on the mobile library service, Ms Anley explained that they had a fleet of eleven vehicles and invested in three new vehicles last year. Kent has a dispersed population and therefore there was a need for a mobile fleet. She was happy to talk to individual Members about local stops.
 - Ms Anley confirmed that the current initial consultation period did not have an end date, as it was about providing the opportunity and necessary time for ideas to be put forward for local areas. There would be full further local public consultation about specific proposals that emerged before any decisions were taken.
 - In relation to Dartford Library and Museum the importance of making sure that these were fully utilised was mentioned.
- (3) RESOLVED that the comments from Members on the report be noted

26. Vulnerable Learner Apprenticeship Project Update

(Item D3)

(1) Mr Hill and Mr Crilley introduced a report which outlined the findings of the independent evaluation of the pilot scheme to support marginalised young people to access Apprenticeships which had been developed in February 2010.

(2) Mr Hill and Mr Crilley noted comments and answered questions from Members which included the following:

- The Chairman welcomed the positive report on the scheme which broke down the barriers between vulnerable young people and employers.
- Mr Crilley explained that this scheme had targeted vulnerable young people of 16 – 19 years old, especially those on the margins of the disability spectrum and NEETS (not in employment, education or training) as there was currently little support available to assist these young people to enter employment.
- Members emphasised the importance of ensuring that the young people on the scheme were supported following their apprenticeship.
- Mr Crilley undertook to follow up with Mr Angell the problem that he was having with getting young people with Learning Disabilities to attend his local Youth Advisory Group.

(3) RESOLVED that the comments from Members on the report be noted.

27. Social Fund Localisation

(Item D4)

(1) Mr Hill, Mr Whittle and Ms Grosskopf introduced a report on the transfer of the national scheme of Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans, which were part of the Discretionary Social Fund, from the Department of Work and Pensions to upper tier (in two tier areas) authorities from April 2013. It was intended that Local

Authorities should design their own local schemes to better meet the needs in their areas.

(2) The report provided Members with background information on the reform and a summary of the thinking to date on what the key features of the scheme should be and the options for delivery. In brief, it was believed that, in contrast to the current scheme, KCC should develop ways to meet needs in ways that did not involve giving money to individuals. Rather, for people eligible for help under the scheme, goods and services should be provided and other help given to deal with the presenting problem and, if possible, any underlying issues affecting them.

(3) The report was being presented now in order for Committee members to be able to influence the development of the local scheme. A more detailed report with a full options appraisal and firm recommendations would be presented to a future Communities Cabinet Committee prior to the Key Decision taken by the Cabinet Member.

(4) Mr Hill, Mr Whittle and Ms Grosskopf noted comments and answered questions from Members which included the following:

- Ms Grosskopf confirmed that currently the loans were almost all recovered from benefits but that this option would not be available to KCC. A loan scheme would be expensive for KCC to operate and there would be difficulties with recovery. However consideration was being given to working with Kent Savers (the Kent Credit Union) for part of the scheme.
- In response to a question on the possibility of the funds received from Central Government running out and if so whether KCC would be required to put more money in to the scheme from its own funds, Ms Grosskopf stated that in order to avoid this KCC was looking at the most cost effective solutions. What also needed to be taken into consideration was that assistance from the scheme helped to prevent people needing to access KCC statutory services which would be more costly to KCC in the long run.
- Ms Grosskopf explained that it was intended that the first year would be a pilot to see how the scheme worked and to assess the demand for it. She referred to the possible model for the pilot year set out in the report but stated that all other options would be considered.
- Ms Grosskopf informed the Committee that there had been some interest from third sector organisations which recycle furniture etc and they were engaging with them.
- Mr Whittle confirmed that there would be a rigorous application process.
- In response to a question on monitoring of the spending of any cash given to insure that it had been used for the appropriate purpose, Ms Grosskopf stated that the intention was to develop a mechanism whereby we would pay for goods and services directly rather than giving money to the individual.
- Regarding the cost of administering the scheme, Ms Grosskopf confirmed that KCC would be receiving funding for this for two years which would

enable staff to be employed as necessary to administer it. Mr Whittle stated that post 2015 funding might be lower and this was a risk for KCC.

- Ms Grosskopf confirmed that they were actively engaged in discussions with the Contact Centre Manger regarding how the Contact Centre could support this scheme. It was extremely important that there were specifically trained staff in the Contact Centre to deal with enquires about this scheme.
- Ms Grosskopf explained that the “Troubled Families” cohort was a small subset of the people who applied for this sort of grants and loans.
- Mr Whittle confirmed that the money allocated by Central Government for these grants and loans was not ring fenced and that after the first two years it may be rolled into the general grant. He suspected that there would be a steep tapering effect after 2015 with the expectation of an increase in the use of the voluntary and community sector to meet needs.
- In relation to benefits data, Ms Grosskopf stated that the law had been changed to allow local authorities to access this in certain circumstances without the permission of the individual but that the necessary processes had not yet been put in place. The DWP has stated that these will be in place by April 2013 when the scheme needed to start.
- Ms Grosskopf acknowledged that there was a reputational risk to KCC with this reform, as Job Centre plus and other Government agencies would inform people that KCC now had the money for these grants and loans.

(5) RESOLVED that the comments by Members on the report be noted

28. Kent School Games - DVD

(Item D5)

(1) Mr Hespe introduced a DVD on the Kent School Games and reminded Members that the Kent School Games were held every 2 years. The Kent School Games in 2012 were the biggest ever and had included schools from the Medway Council area and Independent Schools. There had been 36 sports, with 400 heats and 26 event days. In 2014 the Kent School Games would build on the legacy of 2012 and would include more arts events.

(2) Mr Hespe thanked his team for the work that they had carried out to make the Games such a success.

(3) RESOLVED that the DVD on the Kent School Games be noted

29. Business Planning 2013/14

(Item D6)

(1) Mr Hill and Ms Sanderson presented a report which detailed changes made to the business planning process for 2012/13, as well as highlighting the proposed changes to the process planned for 2013/14 which was the first planning year in

which Cabinet Committees would be part of the planning process. Ms Sanderson explained that KCC's business planning process was now co-ordinated by the Policy & Strategy Relationships team within Business Strategy who would make sure that cross cutting priorities were embedded across the Authority. Business Planning would be carried out at a divisional level. Cabinet Committees had a pre-consultation role and would have the opportunity to consider and comment on the draft business plans before they were approved by the Cabinet in March 2013.

RESOLVED that the changes to the business planning process for 2013-14 be noted and further consideration be given at the November 2012 and January 2013 committee meetings.