

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Thursday, 5th October, 2017**

**2.00 pm**

**Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall,  
Maidstone**







## AGENDA

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 5th October, 2017, at 2.00 pm

Ask for: **Joel Cook/Anna Taylor**

**Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone**

Telephone: **03000 416892/416478**

#### Membership

Conservative (9): Mr P W A Lake (Chairman), Mr A M Ridgers (Vice-Chairman), Mrs C Bell, Mr A Booth, Mr G Cooke, Mr R C Love, Mr J P McInroy, Mr B J Sweetland and Mr J Wright

Liberal Democrat (2): Mr R H Bird and Mrs T Dean, MBE

Labour (2) Mr D Farrell and Dr L Sullivan

Church Representatives (3): Mr D Brunning, Mr J Constanti and Mr Q Roper

Parent Governor (2): Mr K Garsed and Mr A Roy

*Tea/coffee will be available 15 minutes before the start of the meeting*

*County Councillors who are not Members of the Committee but who wish to ask questions at the meeting are asked to notify the Chairman of their questions in advance.*

#### Webcasting Notice

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## **UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

*(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)*

### **A - Committee Business**

- A1 Introduction/Webcast Announcement
- A2 Substitutes
- A3 Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this Meeting
- A4 Minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2017 (Pages 5 - 8)

### **B - Select Committee Updates**

- B1 Bus Transport and Public Subsidy Select Committee - 3 Months on (Pages 9 - 18)

## **EXEMPT ITEMS**

*(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)*

John Lynch  
Head of Democratic Services  
03000 410466

**Wednesday, 27 September 2017**

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 6 September 2017.

PRESENT: Mr P W A Lake (Chairman), Mr A M Ridgers (Vice-Chairman), Mrs C Bell, Mr R H Bird, Mr A Booth, Mr G Cooke, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mr D Farrell, Mr R C Love, Mr J P McInroy, Mr B J Sweetland and Mr J Wright

ALSO PRESENT: Mr M C Dance, Mr R W Gough, Ms D Marsh, Mr P J Oakford, Mrs S Prendergast and Mr K Pugh

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs B Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport), Mr P Leeson (Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education), Mr A Scott-Clark (Director of Public Health), Mr D Smith (Director of Economic Development), Mr M Thomas-Sam (Head of Strategy and Business Support), Mr J Lynch (Head of Democratic Services) and Mrs A Taylor (Scrutiny Research Officer)

### UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

#### **138. Minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2017**

*(Item A4)*

Mr Booth asked why his apologies were not recorded within the minutes of the meeting on 7 July. The Scrutiny Research Officer explained that apologies were recorded on the Council's Committee Management System but that these were not contained within the printed minutes.

The Chairman referred to an update note on the Council's Fire Safety Review from the Director of Infrastructure which had been circulated to the Committee via email. This was considered to be comprehensive and members would await the full report to Cabinet in due course.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2017 were an accurate record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

#### **139. Select Committee Work Programme**

*(Item A5)*

(1) The Scrutiny Committee received 'bids' for three Select Committee topics.

#### **Pupil Premium – Mrs Prendergast**

(2) Mr Gough explained to the Committee that this review would be timely. As attainment had risen, gaps had remained intractable. There had been a high profile Government initiative in the form of Pupil Premium; it would be useful for the Council to look at what good was being achieved with the money received through Pupil Premium, where there were examples of good practice and how this

could be shared. Pupil Premium was money given directly to schools but influenced a performance gap in schools on which KCC was judged.

- (3) Mrs Prendergast gave Members some background on Pupil Premium which had been brought in in 2011 to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils of all abilities. Mrs Prendergast envisaged that the Select Committee could review how the £58million of Pupil Premium per annum was currently being used to benefit Kent's vulnerable learners. The review could identify best practice which could be shared to improve the outcomes for vulnerable learners.
- (4) The Chairman opened the debate up to questions. Members considered this to be a worthy topic which followed on well from the Grammar Schools and Social Mobility topic which referenced Pupil Premium. One Member asked the Corporate Director whether all the data which would be needed for the review would be available. Mr Leeson confirmed that all the data required would be available.
- (5) One Member asked whether it was the intention to look at the cumulative effect of the proposals for the new School Funding Formula as well as Pupil Premium. There were concerns over the two making a huge difference to the income of schools. Mr Gough explained that he considered these to be slightly different issues although it would be for the Select Committee to determine its own Terms of Reference.
- (6) Another Member raised the issue of the performance gap and the link to poor aspirations of children and parents from more deprived backgrounds.

### **Social Isolation**

- (7) Mr Pugh presented the Social Isolation Select Committee proposal and explained that a lot of information was available. He gave an example of how social isolation might occur after a hip operation. There were concerns that once social isolation started occurring and mild depression and mental ill health set in. Research recognised that people needed communities and friends, for example, to help prevent them suffering from mental ill health. It was hoped that the Select Committee would look at the problem of social isolation and come up with solutions to cater for people long term in terms of involvement in the community.
- (8) Mr Thomas-Sam responded and confirmed that the impact of social isolation was well understood and could affect long term health. Both health and social services were working together to try to support people but it was important for Members to look at the contribution of other key agencies as well. Mr Oakford explained that the scope of this proposed review was huge, it covered people of all ages through their lifespan, young people, care leavers, unemployed people and single parents and it was necessary to encompass everybody. Mr Oakford referred to a report from NHS England which focussed on reducing social isolation across a lifespan.
- (9) Ms Marsh asked that the review considered guidance from the late MP Jo Cox which related to loneliness. It was important to understand the difference between loneliness and social isolation. Ms Marsh referred to Blue Zones which were 'happy places' all across the world which invested in social interaction and

relationships. The review needed to look at all areas from libraries to parks. There were also links between loneliness and dementia and research showed that social isolation was linked to physical illness and death.

- (10) A number of Members were concerned at the wide spectrum of the review, it was important that Select Committees did not take on a life of their own and there should be a time limitation on Select Committee so there was an opportunity for a broader range of work. It was suggested that every decision made by the County Council should reference whether the decision improved or detracted from social isolation.
- (11) A Member asked for assurances that this review could be worthwhile and meaningful whilst touching on all the subjects that it needed to touch upon. The member also sought clarification that within the Terms of Reference the Committee would be establishing whether there was a close correlation between social isolation and mental ill health. Mr Scott-Clarke explained that there was evidence connecting social isolation and the health of an individual. The Select Committee would be told when drawing up their Terms of Reference that there was a close correlation between social isolation and mental ill health.
- (12) There was also a cost to getting the issues around this topic wrong, and the Select Committee should also look at how much could be saved by getting this right. One Member suggested another angle which was the cultural aspect to this review and the promotion of voluntary groups and churches.
- (13) Mr Thomas-Sam, suggested that the 3 most critical issues to this review were identifying who was socially isolated in Kent, to identify the extent to which current service provision was effective and investigate how to improve mental health and wellbeing at all stages of life.

### **Affordable Housing**

- (14) Mrs Dean presented the Affordable Housing Select Committee proposal and explained that the Committee had received three extremely good subjects but that she was not pressing for Affordable Housing to be tackled immediately. Mrs Dean met with the Leader earlier in the week and now having received the officers' comments she proposed that the Select Committee proposal be refined. The lack of affordable housing was important and affected the Council's ability to recruit and created problems with education, health and social isolation. This was an important subject but there was no statutory responsibility on the council. However the Council did have large investments and land holdings and this issue would have to be tackled in conjunction with other agencies who had responsibility in law. Mrs Dean suggested that the subject be reviewed and considered it a strong contender for the third Select Committee subject.
- (15) Mr Dance responded and explained that this was a key issue, as there was often an Infrastructure 'lag'. The market was dominated by large house builders and consideration needed to be given to the introduction of innovative ways of building.

- (16) The Corporate Director explained that although the Council did not build houses it did have a role, it was a large investor and her directorate would be pleased to work with Mrs Dean to further refine the topic.
- (17) A Member welcomed the review and raised the issue of twin hatted members who might sit on planning committees for the district councils. It might be possible through the County to escalate pressure to some of the larger developers. Members agreed that the three topics were strong and worthwhile issues. Members were pleased with the opportunity to refine this topic further to ensure it worked well for Kent. Good housing was one of the key determinates of people's health and social wellbeing; it was possible to build very good housing with more innovative methods.

## **Conclusion**

- (18) The Chairman concurred that Members had heard proposals for three strong worthwhile subjects, all deserved the Committee's support and he would like to see all three established.
- (19) Members discussed the resource available to the Select Committee and the possibility of being able to establish two Select Committees running concurrently but this was counter balanced by the budget pressures on the County Council, there was only one research officer available.
- (20) It was considered that Pupil Premium could be dealt with in a relatively short period of time, reporting to County Council in March 2018. Social Isolation was considered to be a complex issue which would be considered on the conclusion of the first topic and the Provision of Affordable Housing to Kent Residents to follow but work to be undertaken to develop the scope of the brief at the earliest opportunity.

RESOLVED that the Select Committee on 'Pupil Premium – narrowing the attainment gap for Kent's vulnerable learners' be established to report to County Council in March 2018.



**From:** Matthew Balfour, Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport, Highways and Waste

Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director, Growth, Environment and Transport

**To:** **Scrutiny Committee – 5 October 2017**

**Subject:** Bus Select Committee Action Plan Update

**Classification** Unrestricted

**Summary:**

In accordance with the process for monitoring Select Committee recommendations as set out in the Constitution, (Appendix 4 – part 4), an action plan from the Cabinet Member and Corporate Director should be submitted to Scrutiny Committee for consideration three months after the County Council has received the Select Committee’s final report.

This report sets out the Action Plan developed to deliver the Select Committee’s recommendations and the progress made to date following the approval of the recommendations at County Council.

**1. Background**

1.1 The Bus Select Committee published its report in March 2017. The Terms of Reference were:

- To examine the current delivery model of local bus transport in Kent.
- To assess the extent to which KCC can prioritise support of the current delivery model of local bus transport in Kent, while having due regard to the resource implications and the budget setting processes.
- To explore whether alternative models of local bus transport delivery are available and, if so, to consider their viability and effectiveness.
- To consider the implications of the recent Bus Services Bill for bus transport in Kent.
- To make recommendations after having gathered evidence and information throughout the review

1.2 The Select Committee found that the local authority is working hard, in collaboration with local bus operators and other organisations, to provide quality bus services for Kent residents but that more could be done and agreed a number of recommendations.

1.3 These recommendations and progress to date are set out in Appendix 1 which is attached to this report.

## **2. Recommendation(s):**

Members of the Scrutiny Committee are asked to acknowledge the progress to date to deliver the recommendations of the Bus Transport Select Committee as set out in Appendix 1.

## **3. Appendices**

Appendix 1: Bus Select Committee – Progress against Action Plan

## **4. Contact details**

Report Author:	Philip Lightowler
Name and title:	Head of Public Transport
Telephone number:	03000 414073
Email address:	philip.lightowler@kent.gov.uk

### Buses Select Committee – Progress against Action Plan 2017

Recommendation	Progress to Date	Status	Comments	Lead Officer
<p><b>Recommendation 1:</b> Kent County Council should appoint a "bus panel", composed of a number of KCC Members, to review the current method of prioritising subsidisation of socially necessary bus routes, to make sure that it reflects the current needs of local communities more accurately.</p>	<p>A Member led review panel for the criteria has been proposed. This would have representation from the Select Committee and go through the Key Decision governance process.</p>	<p>In Progress</p>	<p>Urgent progress required.</p>	<p>PL</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 2:</b> KCC's Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport should write to the Secretary of State for Transport asking for a review of the calculation of the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) funding to ensure that it is sufficient to cover the cost of the scheme in Kent.</p>	<p>This position has been communicated to Central Government on numerous occasions previously. A letter from the KCC's Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport will be progressed.</p>	<p>In Progress</p>	<p>As identified, the point has been documented but this is likely to be lost in the wider financial picture as this funding is received as part of the annual settlement and is not in itself identifiable any longer.</p>	<p>PL</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 3:</b> The Select Committee urges KCC's Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport to protect the discretionary element of the ENCTS scheme offered by KCC.</p>	<p>This is believed to relate to the discretionary provision for companion passes. The view of the Select Committee has been relayed to the Cabinet Member. There are currently no plans to remove this offering.</p>	<p>Complete</p>	<p>It is worth noting that in 2018 there is a need to renew 195,000 expiring ENCTS passes. A working group has been established in relation to this exercise.</p>	<p>PL</p>

Recommendation	Progress to Date	Status	Comments	Lead Officer
<p><b>Recommendation 4:</b> KCC's Public Transport division should work with bus operators to assess the viability of introducing the opportunity of upgrading the Young Person's Travel Pass to include bus travel during evenings, weekends and holidays.</p>	<p>From Sept. 2017, Stagecoach offer all YPTP holders free evening and weekend travel. Similarly Chalkwell offer a £1 flat fare for all pass holders. KCC officers are currently encouraging Arriva to make a similar offer to pass holders from Sept. 18. Both offers are made commercially by the operators without the need for additional KCC reimbursement.</p>	<p>In progress</p>	<p>Evening and weekend travel was removed from the KCC offer when YPTP replaced KFP in 2014. Reintroducing this feature as part of the scheme would come at significant cost which is not budgeted. As such encouraging commercial offerings from operators is considered to be the only sustainable means of provision.</p>	<p>SP</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 5:</b> KCC should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the establishment of a number of bus transport forums. The remit of these forums should be to discuss local bus transport-related issues and to identify possible solutions, which are then referred to Quality Bus Partnerships (QBPs) through formal communication channels.</li> <li>• Ensure that at least one Kent County councillor is a member of each QBP, and that their attendance is formalised.</li> <li>• Encourage all Kent QBPs to include all bus operators in their areas.</li> <li>• Encourage all Kent QBPs to brief their respective Joint Transportation Boards on a regular basis on bus transport-related priorities, measures for intervention and achievements.</li> </ul>	<p>KCC officers have raised this with bus operators through the Confederation of Passenger Transport (the formal trade body). In the east of the County, Stagecoach are investigating establishing forums in each of their operating Districts (as of 20.09.2017 Canterbury group almost ready to trial) and KCC are informing representation at these and their relationship with QBPs. KCC will chair the groups. In addition TWBC already host such a forum and it expected that Maidstone will follow suit. Other operator attendance at QBPs is</p>	<p>In progress</p>	<p>Much of this recommendation was / is being progressed. The action plan in this area is to expand upon and replicate this across the County to ensure consistent coverage. Attendance of other operators at QBPS requires careful consideration. The QBP model works where an operator has a significant commercial network which can be used to reciprocate the efforts of local authority partners. Chalkwell are part of the</p>	<p>DB</p>

Recommendation	Progress to Date	Status	Comments	Lead Officer
	<p>being reviewed and where appropriate invitations will be extended.</p> <p>Attendance at QBPs has been reviewed and 5 of 8 already have County Member representation. Public Transport are liaising with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport to establish how County Members at the remaining QBPs can be identified.</p> <p>Public Transport have liaised with the Highway Managers to identify how to link into JTB's in terms of reporting – This is likely to be achieved through the Highways Work Programme information raised at JTBS.</p>		<p>Swale QBP and there will be roles for others.</p> <p>This cannot however be an all operator forum.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation 6:</b> KCC's Public Transport division should examine demand management measures, where feasible and appropriate, to ease traffic congestion and promote bus patronage in Kent.</p>		No progress	<p>Clarity around this recommendation is sought. Bus punctuality measures are picked up through KCC's Punctuality Improvement Partnerships (PIPS). Demand Management might suggest increased parking tariffs.</p>	TBC
<p><b>Recommendation 7:</b> KCC's Highways division should ensure clear lines of communication with bus operators to give them timely notification of roadworks and coordinate such programmes to minimise disruption to bus</p>	<p>Both elements are being taken up for review with the appropriate part of Kent Highways.</p>	In progress	<p>Charging will be explored but PT's understanding is that this is difficult where the law is very prescriptive in terms of</p>	SP

Recommendation	Progress to Date	Status	Comments	Lead Officer
<p>services. The Division should also investigate the feasibility of increasing the size of fines and using the income from utility companies that overrun roadworks programmes to improve the range of community bus provision for Kent residents.</p>			<p>what can be charged, at what level and what any funding generated can be spent on.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation 8:</b> KCC's Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport should lobby the Government, Network Rail and Train Operating Companies to include improved connectivity between bus and rail services in Kent as a key element of South Eastern's new franchise agreement in 2018.</p>	<p>PT / Highways officers have been working with South Eastern to improve connectivity between rail and bus at many of Kent's Stations (e.g. West Malling / Ashford)</p> <p>KCCs formal response to the DfT consultation (May 2017) on the new South Eastern Franchise clearly established the authority position with respect to connectivity and gave equal importance to bus / rail as rail / rail connections.</p> <p>On a detail level - PT officers have already contributed to KCC's response to the draft timetables proposed under the new franchises. Responses included comments where there was an adverse reaction for connectivity and / or primary flows such as those for scholars.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Typically it would be more the case that buses can more easily adapt to connect with trains as opposed to the other way round.</p> <p>PT officers will continue to promote and encourage connectivity in future discussions / future consultation responses and will fight the public transport corner on infrastructure schemes at stations. e.g. as per Gravesend, Ashford</p>	DB
<p><b>Recommendation 9:</b> KCC's Public Transport division should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek greater financial contributions from local bus operators and businesses towards the</li> </ul>	<p>Charging for bus stop infrastructure will be explored primarily with operators likely in the form of a departure charge. The extent</p>	In progress	<p>Charging for the maintenance of bus stops will be explored but is considered to carry risk.</p>	DB

Recommendation	Progress to Date	Status	Comments	Lead Officer
<p>provision and maintenance of local bus infrastructure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage Kent districts to make greater use of the Community Infrastructure Levy to finance local bus infrastructure schemes.</li> </ul>	<p>to which this is supported by the law will need to be understood.</p> <p>PT officers have established regular meetings and closer working with KCC's Strategic Transport planners whom in turn inform responses to planning applications. On a more individual scheme basis – examples of contributions can already be seen – for instance Stagecoach committed funding to work at Ashford Station Forecourt and Polhill Garden Centre provided a bus shelter on its grounds to support the Go-Coach 431 service.</p>		<p>This is a relatively inexpensive activity and is also believed to be a statutory function. Charging operators could undermine the sustainability of some bus services and is contrary to the spirit of QBPs.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation 10:</b> KCC's Public Transport division should strongly encourage local bus operators to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extend the range of their discounted fares, particularly for those on lower incomes.</li> <li>Expand their network coverage and service frequency, especially in rural areas, to better meet the needs of local communities.</li> </ul>	<p>PT officers are always looking to encourage operators to develop services and offers that are attractive to customers. Offers in respect of YTP are most realistic and are being progressed. Requests and opportunities for new and additional services are frequently taken to operators for commercial consideration when they are presented.</p>	On-going	<p>Ultimately, these will be commercial considerations for bus operators and there is no opportunity for LCC to compel operators to expand their offerings in either area. There is a tension between this recommendation and Rec. #11.</p>	SP
<p><b>Recommendation 11:</b> KCC's Public Transport division should identify and subsidise a number of bus services that would better serve selected rural communities and give them access to their nearest main towns on selected days.</p>	<p>This approach could be picked up through recommendation #1 as it would need a different criteria and approach to support this.</p> <p>This sort of model is also being explored through the Total Transport project which</p>	In progress	<p>A change to the criteria and political support to this alternative provision would be necessary to support this change which would be sensitive with bus users.</p>	SP

Recommendation	Progress to Date	Status	Comments	Lead Officer
	is looking at a multi-modal “hub and spoke” model using the Weald area as a pilot.			
<p><b>Recommendation 12:</b> KCC's Public Transport division should urge local bus operators to increase the deployment of smaller buses, particularly in congested Kent localities. In the case of KCC tendered services, the appropriate bus size should be specified within the commissioning process.</p>	<p>Stagecoach (in Ashford) and Arriva (in Sittingbourne) are respectively trialling the use of smaller buses in parts of their town networks. This will assist with understanding the benefits of this approach.</p> <p>KCC tendered services already specify the minimum requirement for bus capacities. This is typically governed by the peak (school) load and it can therefore be the case that vehicles operating in the off-peak are therefore bigger than strictly required. Some tenders can be issued requesting differing vehicle sizes dependent upon the time of the day.</p>	In progress	<p>With respect to KCC subsidised services, tenders can be issued with options for differing vehicle sizes bespoke to the size of the day. It is highlighted that this approach would likely generate additional cost where more than one vehicle will be required and will also generate additional positioning mileage in conflict with Rec. #6.</p>	SP
<p><b>Recommendation 13:</b> KCC's Public Transport division should make available an approved driving course to train a number of bus drivers to be employed by smaller bus operators in Kent.</p>		No progress	<p>It is believed that this recommendation relates to industry feedback about the challenges recruiting and retaining licensed drivers. PT will engage with operators to understand how we can support them in this respect. The provision of a KCC run course is likely to be difficult</p>	SP



Recommendation	Progress to Date	Status	Comments	Lead Officer
			where this area is already heavily regulated with driver (CPC) training already a requirement.	
<p><b>Recommendation 14:</b> KCC's Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport should reiterate to Arriva and Stagecoach the importance of the Connected Kent and Medway smartcard and should urge these companies to participate in the scheme.</p>	<p>Pressure has continued to be applied to both operators to encourage participation and Arriva are expected to become part of the scheme imminently.</p>	<p>In progress</p>		<p>SP</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 15:</b> KCC's Public Transport division should investigate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extending coverage of Community Transport operations in the County.</li> <li>• Acting as a single point of information for all local transport provision and developing a database which holds up-to-date information on all community transport schemes in the County.</li> </ul>	<p>KCC's new framework agreement for all PSV procurement has already attracted additional CT suppliers to it. PT are inviting Parishes to be the focus of our next CT forum and as part of this will make available funding and / or vehicles to encourage them to provide Community Transport Services. A tool-kit is also being developed to support them. 'Brokerage' is absolutely the right aspiration but will need to be explored in terms of feasibility. The CT forum and approaches to other LTA's will be used to explore this. A bid will be made to KCC's internal LTP pot for funding in 18-19 to facilitate a further community transport grant scheme.</p>	<p>In progress</p>		<p>SP</p>

Recommendation	Progress to Date	Status	Comments	Lead Officer
<p><b>Recommendation 16:</b> The Select Committee endorses the Bus Services Bill and strongly supports the franchising model of bus transport. The Committee recommends a full investigation into the adoption, in Kent, of the most appropriate elements of the Bill. The adoption of any element of the Bill in Kent should reflect the features highlighted by the Committee.</p>	<p>KCC's response to the Buses Bill consultation supports this view. A report to SCB explored the potential approach.</p>	<p>In progress</p>	<p>The extent to which this is deliverable will be determined by the final bill and the powers afforded LTA's without Mayoral governance.</p>	<p>SP</p>