



AGENDA

CABINET

**Monday, 27th April, 2020, at 10.00 am
Online**

Ask for: **Denise Fitch**
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In response to COVID-19, the Government has legislated to permit remote attendance by Elected Members at formal meetings. This is conditional on other Elected Members and the public being able to hear those participating in the meeting. This meeting of the Cabinet will be streamed live and can be watched via the Media link on the Webpage for this meeting.

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

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

1. Apologies and Substitutes
2. Declaration of Interests by Member in Items on the Agenda for this meeting
3. Minutes of the Meetings held on 27 January and 2 March 2020 (Pages 1 - 12)
4. Suicide Prevention Programme Update (Pages 13 - 20)
5. Kent Together Update (Presentation)
6. Governance Update on Virtual Meetings (Pages 21 - 26)
7. COVID 19 Corporate Planning

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)

Benjamin Watts
General Counsel
03000 416814

Friday, 17 April 2020

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

MINUTES of a meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Monday, 27 January 2020.

PRESENT: Mr R W Gough (Chairman), Mrs C Bell, Miss S J Carey, Mrs S Chandler, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr R L H Long, TD, Mr P J Oakford, Mr M D Payne, Mrs S Prendergast and Mr M Whiting

ALSO PRESENT: Mr E E C Hotson

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr D Adams (Area Education Officer - South Kent), Mrs A Beer (Corporate Director of People and Communications), Mr R Clark (Contract and Commissioning Support Manager), Mr D Cockburn (Corporate Director Strategic & Corporate Services), Ms Z Cooke (Corporate Director of Finance), Mrs B Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport), Mr M Dunkley CBE (Corporate Director for Children Young People and Education), Miss E Feakins (Chief Accountant), Mrs C Head (Head of Finance Operations), Mr S Jones (Director of highways, Transportation and Waste), Mr A Loosemore (Head of Highway Asset Management), Ms K Pettitt (Principal Transport Planner - Strategy), Mr J Ratcliffe (Transport Strategy Manager), Mr A Scott-Clark (Director of Public Health), Mr D Shipton (Head of Finance - Planning, Policy & Strategy), Ms P Southern (Corporate Director, Adult Social Care and Health), Mrs K Stewart (Director of Environment Planning and Enforcement), Mrs A Taylor (Scrutiny Research Officer) and Mr B Watts (General Counsel)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

127. Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 December 2019

(Item 4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2019 were a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

128. Cabinet Member Updates

(Item 5)

Each Cabinet Member was invited to update Cabinet on recent events within their portfolio:

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services – given that a lot of information from this portfolio was already on the Cabinet agenda Mr Oakford did not have any new updates.

Cabinet Member for Economic Development:

- The Cabinet Member passed on his praise to Kent Film Office which had brought in an estimated £2.3million to the Kent Economy;
- The award winning 'No Use Empty' scheme continued its success.

Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services:

- As of 31 December it was possible for mixed sex couples to enter into a Civil Partnership which was very positive;
- The Turner Prize at the Turner Contemporary Gallery had been an unmitigated success and had produced the busiest Autumn of all time for the Gallery;
- The new £20 note featuring JMW Turner, Margate Lighthouse and Turner Contemporary was due to be released in February.

Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport:

- Pothole enquiries increased over the last month due to the wet weather. This was already being addressed with £1.2 million being allocated to the Pothole Blitz this month;
- Mr Payne referred to Faversham bridge which has serious structural failings. Two temporary bridges had been put in place making it safer for pedestrians as well as cars. Mr Payne thanked the residents of Faversham for their cooperation.

Cabinet Member for Environment:

- On 30 January there would be a cross party meeting on the Kent Environment Strategy, in addition there was also a cross party working group on 'Natural Capital'.

Cabinet Member for Communications, Engagement and People:

- KCC's Strategic Statement 5 year plan was out for consultation until 17 February. The proposals were built on invaluable feedback on where resources should be placed to make the biggest difference to the people of Kent. Everyone was encouraged to respond to the consultation;
- Apprenticeships - offers had been made to 25 social work degree apprentices. KCC was holding an Apprenticeship Celebration Event on 31 March 2020.

Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services:

- A joint letter had been sent from Kent and Portsmouth councils to other local authorities in the South East regarding the levels of Under-age Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) arriving in their ports. Both authorities were in a disadvantaged and unsustainable position in relation to this and other authorities had been asked to begin accepting transfers;
- Mrs Chandler referred to a Kent online and Guardian article which had incorrectly claimed that children in Kent were placed in unregulated homes more than anywhere else in the country. This was not correct and the Corporate Director had written to the editor of the Guardian to request that an apology be printed;
- Mental Health week was starting on 3 February, HeadStart Kent had a revised resilience hub and a new young people's website called Mood Spark. 18 Kent Schools had been awarded the Kent Resilience Award for emotional wellbeing.

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills:

- Regarding the Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision, discussions had taken place with every district leader in Kent. Kent was in a good position with 92% of primary schools good or outstanding (compared to 87%

nationally). 86% of secondary schools were rated as good (compared to 76% nationally). Kent had one of the lowest rates of permanent exclusions in the South East;

- The Community Learning Service had done some excellent work and had been shortlisted for the Times Education supplement award.

Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health:

- There had been a recent briefing to Members on the Kent and Medway Medical School, based in Canterbury. There had been over 1500 applications and offers were due to go out for when the school opened in the Autumn.
- The Cabinet Member had spent time in local hospitals, the issue of patient flow was topical and it was important to see how social care and health operated the discharge process. Mrs Bell had been enormously impressed by the collaboration between services and willingness to work in partnership.

The Leader explained that the MHCLG Secretary had written to local authorities urging the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition of Anti-Semitism. It was the Leader's wish that KCC did this and he would bring an item to the next Cabinet meeting explaining how this would be incorporated.

RESOLVED that Cabinet note the verbal updates from Cabinet Members.

129. Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring - November 2019-20

(Item 6)

Emma Feakins, (Chief Accountant) and Cath Head (Head of Finance, Operations) were present for this item.

1. Mr Oakford introduced this report, which contained information up to 30 November 2019. The report showed a substantial pressure of £9million within the CYPE (Children, Young People and Education) directorate, this was in the areas of Special Educational Needs (SEN), Home to School transport, Care Leavers support. The forecast overspend was masked by £7million underspend in financing items, helping to keep a balanced position. There was no wish to drawn down on reserves to balance the budget. The budget included £45million of savings, and the work of the Corporate Directors, Directors and all staff was recognised in contributing to achieving these savings. There was a variance of £110million in the Capital Programme, but the majority of this was due to rephasing.

2. Emma Feakins explained that compared to this point last year the Council was in a far better position. There were concerns around the pressure within CYPE but there was a slight improvement in Home to School transport.

3. Cath Head referred to capital rephasing and explained that £63million of rephasing was in the Growth, Environment and Transport (GET) directorate, £20million in CYPE but this was across a huge number of projects, buildings and assets. Zena Cooke explained that a Capital Officer Group had been established to develop and oversee the 10 year capital programme, with representation from all relevant parts of the Council as well as strategic commissioning. There would be changes in year which would show an ambitious but more realistic delivery programme in terms of phasing.

4. Matt Dunkley referred to SEN and placement costs, there were challenging market conditions which officers were working to overcome. The overall number of LAC in Kent had not risen substantially. This was not the case in neighbouring authorities and this had resulted in children being placed in Kent from other authorities.

5. The Leader commented that it was Cabinet's expectation that the budget would be balanced at the end of the year, and the Council was in a significantly stronger position than at the end of the previous financial year.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- i) **Note** the forecast revenue budget monitoring position for 2019-20 and capital budget monitoring position for 2019-20 to 2021-22, and that the forecast pressure on the revenue budget needs to be eliminated as we progress through the year.
- ii) **Agree** the capital budget adjustments set out in section 6.4.
- iii) **Note** the Prudential Indicators Monitoring at Appendix 3

130. Capital Programme 2020-23 and Revenue Budget 2020-21

(Item 7)

Dave Shipton (Head of Finance Policy, Planning and Strategy) was present for this item.

1. Mr Oakford explained that the draft budget proposals had been through Cabinet Committees and Scrutiny Committee. Cabinet was asked to endorse the budget before it was submitted to County Council for approval. The budget was based on a one-year settlement which was difficult. He explained that the council was looking to make a further £34million of savings next year. Since the report was published the National Living Wage had been increased above the amount accounted for in the budget providing an incremental pressure of around £2.7million. There had been good news in relation to the tax base and collection fund estimate which would reduce the draw down from reserves from £4.5million to £3.7million.

2. The Cabinet Member was content with the revenue budget but had some concerns over the capital programme, the council had £1billion of debt which cost £100million a year to finance.

3. Dave Shipton explained that Friday 31 January was when KCC would get the final tax base notification from the district councils and the business rate growth. The Budget Book would be republished for County Council on 13 February to include any final changes.

4. Mr Shipton clarified paragraph 5.5, £4.5million was the drawn down from reserves after the £700k reduction, a number of announcements in relation to specific grants were awaited.

5. Andrew Scott-Clark confirmed that the Public Health Grant had not been published yet so the Council was currently unaware of the budget for next year.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

Endorse the draft budget, taking into account the changes outlined in the report, and note that the final decision on council tax precept will be presented at the County Council meeting on 13 February 2020.

131. 19/00079 - Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2020-24
(Item 8)

David Adams (Area Education Officer – South Kent) was present for this item.

1. Mr Long introduced this item and explained that the Education Commissioning Plan set out how KCC discharged its statutory responsibility to provide sufficient early years, special educational needs, primary and secondary places. It was an all-encompassing and very detailed plan.

2. The cost of delivering the school places was met by the basic need grant from government and prudential borrowing by KCC. This was in addition to, where possible, S106 developer contributions and community infrastructure levy. It was important to note that KCC was attempting to discharge its statutory duties against the background of insufficient timely information from government. However, Mr Long was confident that, since the new government was in place, ministers would respond to the Council's request for timely information and sufficient funding.

3. Mr Dunkley explained that this was the most challenging landscape experienced for some time. The Leader stressed that the methodology still projected significant increases in secondary provision required over the next 4 years or so and continuing into the late 2020s.

4. David Adams explained that the element of forward funding of future basic need and developer contributions would be of critical importance.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approve the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2020-24.

132. 19/00085 - Thanet Parkway Railway Station - Scheme Delivery
(Item 9)

Katie Stewart (Director Environment, Planning and Enforcement) Joseph Ratcliffe (Transport Strategy Manager) and Katie Pettitt (Principal Transport Planner) were present for this item.

1. Mr Payne asked for clarification over whether the public opinion survey was sufficiently independent and significantly robust in its conclusions and whether yet another consultation had also been taking place in relation to planning aspects of this proposal.

2. Joe Ratcliffe confirmed that there had been a statutory planning consultation between 10 December and 20 January (although responses could be received up to the date of the Planning Committee) and in addition, a public opinion survey had taken place between 6 and 16 January. The report was received late on 23 January and was published for Cabinet on 24 January. There was a competitive tender to procure the survey and Lake Market Research were successful. The survey was of

the catchment area of the station, which included the fringes of the urban area of Thanet, the Thanet North Coast and North of Dover District including Sandwich. The sample size was 379 people of which 110 were in the core catchment area of the village of Cliffsend, this was designed to be representative of the station catchment of 20,341 people. Based on the sample size there was confidence that the results were accurate to within 5%. This was absolutely independent and robust but there was always a margin of error, as there was with any survey such as an election exit poll.

3. Mr Payne explained that this was a place making opportunity. The project dated back to 2010 and featured in Kent's Local Transport Plan 4, adopted by County Council in 2017. The report from the latest survey gave no over-riding reason why the project should be cancelled at this stage. Mr Payne considered that Thanet had been losing out with the port of Ramsgate being shut, Manston airport being shut and trains taking too long to get to London, but that things had been changing and high-speed services to East Kent led to more job opportunities and more investment in this region of Kent. The concept of parkway stations had been shown to work elsewhere, and Thanet Parkway was an infrastructure first project. The station was planned for buses and pedestrians as much as for cars, and electric vehicle charging points had been built into the design from the outset. Mr Payne supported continuing investment in the project to the maximum shown in the report.

4. Joe Ratcliffe stated that prior to the second statutory planning consultation in 2019/20 which followed one in 2018, there had been two public consultations (2015 – over 500 responses and 2017 – nearly 400 responses). Opinions had been mixed, in 2015 68% of respondents had said they would feel at least one benefit of the station. In 2017 34% said they would use the new station, 26% were unsure. These were very mixed results. Within the current survey, of 110 people in Cliffsend village surveyed, 45% of people said yes, that the station should be built, 38% said no. 12% were neither for nor against. The strongest support was in the South of the catchment area where 57% were for the station and 18% against. In the Northern part of the catchment area, 47% were against the station and 39% for. The overall result, weighted in relation to population distribution across the catchment, was 45% in support of the station and 38% against. Accounting for a 5% sampling error this was very close, opinion was split; however, it was slightly more for than against.

5. Mr Whiting asked about the results of those residents who regularly use the train. Joe Ratcliffe explained that of those people who use trains once a week 68% say yes, the station should be built. This was a small sample size, however, and it was not possible to say that this was within the 5% sampling error.

6. Ben Watts asked for clarification on the figures within the report which stated that 67% of regular train users thought the station should be built, but this had been rounded to 68% in the Lake Market Research Report.

7. The Leader explained that if the project did not progress it would be very likely that the LEP funding would be lost. Joe Ratcliffe referred to paragraph 3.14 which set out the reasons for proceeding with the survey of public opinion for the scheme and why a full public consultation was not appropriate.

8. Katie Stewart explained that this project dated back to 2009-10 and research into how to get the most out of the introduction of HS1 rail services for regeneration in East Kent. The proposal for Thanet Parkway came out of an extensive options

appraisal and was an option that was determined to be the best opportunity. It was considered that this project would widen the job market for local people, and support growth in the current local plan.

9. Mrs Chandler referred to attracting inward investment into East Kent. This was an opportunity for supporting business at Discovery Park, and the station would be a “game changer,” providing a significant opportunity which would not appear otherwise. Opportunities to support the attraction of new jobs were vital in this part of Kent and good transport links were key to this.

10. Mr Oakford confirmed that he would be supporting this decision, as this was an infrastructure project which would help grow businesses in the area. It had support from local businesses, was building infrastructure for the future and was an investment which KCC should support because it supported local businesses.

11. Mr Whiting confirmed that he would also be supporting the decision. From an economic development perspective, it was vital that East Kent had access to other markets for jobs and for people to come and work in Thanet. The High Speed rail link could help do that. If the investment wasn’t made now, it would be unlikely that it would ever be made.

12. Mr Hotson explained that there was a consensus for this to go ahead, and that in his dialogue with district and borough councils across the county, there was an indication that one of the main problems they faced was a lack of infrastructure before there was growth. Growth was planned for East Kent in terms of housing and business. This was one of the first instances where there would be infrastructure in place before there was growth. He commented that before the plan was finalised there should be a traffic plan as well. Katie Stewart confirmed that her team would be working with the highways team, to maximise the opportunity for more sustainable connections in the future.

14. Mr Hill confirmed that he supported the project, given that one of the priorities of KCC was to regenerate Thanet and to address the deprivation in this part of the county. A lot of investment had been put into Thanet and this was the time to reinforce the successes and produce even better results.

15. The Leader explained that he and colleagues had come to the project with no preconceptions over it. The difficulties and concerns with the project had been recognised, and it was a significant financial contribution and commitment. The project is about putting in infrastructure to provide support for Thanet’s economic development and north Dover’s economic development over many years, but that in some ways it’s now or never. There was very little likelihood that the SELEP funding (or its equivalent) would be available in five years’ time, for example. The wording in the decision was up to a total KCC contribution of £17.81m and there was work to be done on securing other sources of funding and working on the overall cost. There was a genuine mix of opinion from the community, but there was strong support from businesses and if KCC was to step away it might damage credibility with the LEP and the business community. There was also a strong partnership on this project with local councils, including cross party support at Thanet District Council.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

1) agree to progress and deliver the Thanet Parkway Railway Station project (up to a total KCC contribution of £17.81m, subject to necessary increases to the capital budget allocation in the 2020/21 County Council budget), which will include the following key activities;

- a) undertaking detailed design; and subject to planning approval;
- b) completing the acquisition of the land; and
- c) entering into contracts as necessary for construction.

2) delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment & Transport, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, to take appropriate actions necessary to implement this decision, including but not limited to, deciding the preferred procurement route and entering into relevant contracts (of which KCC's contribution is to the maximum value of £17.81m) or other legal agreements.

The Leader wished Katie Stewart well as this would be her last Cabinet meeting before leaving KCC for a senior role at Surrey County Council. Members thanked her and wished her well in her future role.

133. 20/00015 - Highways Term Services Commissioning Programme
(Item 10)

Simon Jones (Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste), Andrew Loosemore (Head of Highways Asset Management) and Robert Clark (Contract and Commissioning Support Manager) were present for this item.

1. Mr Payne introduced this item, which was the contract covering certain strategic responsibilities, he referred to paragraph 1.2 which set out the current delivery model. Four options for the future provision of services had been considered in detail.

2. Simon Jones outlined the proposed next steps for the Highway Term Maintenance Contract and explained the four options available for the future delivery.

RESOLVED the Cabinet agree to:

1) provide the Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport delegated authority to procure and enter into appropriate contractual arrangements for the provision of highway term services in accordance with the expectations set out in the report.

2) provide the Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport delegated authority to procure and enter into appropriate contractual arrangements for the provision of capital drainage works including any potential extension periods in accordance with the expectations set out in the report.

3) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport to award contract extensions of the contracts in accordance with appropriate extension clauses within the contract.

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

MINUTES of a meeting of the Cabinet held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Monday, 2 March 2020.

PRESENT: Mr R W Gough (Chairman), Mrs C Bell, Miss S J Carey, Mrs S Chandler, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr R L H Long, TD, Mr P J Oakford, Mr M D Payne, Mrs S Prendergast and Mr M Whiting

ALSO PRESENT: Mr E E C Hotson

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs A Beer (Corporate Director of People and Communications), Mr D Cockburn (Corporate Director Strategic & Corporate Services), Mr S Collins (Director of Integrated Children's Services (West Kent and Early Help and Preventative Services Lead)), Ms Z Cooke (Corporate Director of Finance), Mrs B Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport), Ms E Sanderson (Strategic Business Adviser), Mr A Scott-Clark (Director of Public Health), Ms P Southern (Corporate Director, Adult Social Care and Health), Mrs A Taylor (Scrutiny Research Officer), Mr B Watts (General Counsel) and Mr D Whittle (Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

134. Cabinet Member Updates

(Item 4)

Each Cabinet Member was invited to update Cabinet on recent events within their portfolio:

Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services:

- A workshop had been held with young people, carers, senior leaders and practitioners to agree part of the written statement of action - this had been a very successful event.

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills:

- There had been some good news relating to the budget and the Secretary of State had approved the 1% transfer from schools for High Needs. There was a great benefit in supporting greater inclusion of young people with EHCPs in mainstream schools.
- In relation to secondary schools more than 94% pupils received an offer for one of their 4 preferred schools. This number had increased by more than 1000 in recent years. There had been an ongoing debate as to how best to provide additional school places for school children in Thanet, the Cabinet Member reported that the Secretary of State had confirmed his decision that he would not accept plans to cancel the proposed new secondary school in Thanet. Therefore he expected the plans for the new school to go ahead as previously proposed. This was disappointing but the decision was clear and Members and Officers looked forward to working with Head Teachers, the

Department for Education and the Regional Schools Commissioner to bring about new secondary school provision for Thanet.

Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health:

- As of 2pm on Sunday 1 March there were 35 known cases of Coronavirus in the UK, some of the new cases had shown local transmission. This was a fast moving situation and the UK continued to limit the spread of the virus by early identification and self-isolation. The key to containment was good hygiene practice. The advice was not to visit your GP surgery in case of symptoms but to use the NHS website or phone 111 for advice.
- Andrew Scott-Clark concurred that this was fast moving, the Government's policy was being set nationally on the advice of Public Health England and the Chief Medical Officer in line with World Health Organisation guidance. This was the early stages of what might be a pandemic, currently within the containment phase, however the key message was that the risk remained low.

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services:

- The Council had recently approved its budget. The process for this year would look at a budget which supported the 5 year plan and strategic outcomes.
- The Budget would also look at the spend of other local authorities, and the outcomes of spend and difference made. This was a more scientific approach to budgeting. The Capital Officer Group was progressing well and a paper would be brought back to Members. The Corporate Director and Deputy Leader would be holding regular meetings with Cabinet Members and Corporate Directors to review the performance of the revenue and capital budget and keep track of the agreed savings.

Cabinet Member for Communications, Engagement and People:

- Last week had seen the launch of KCC's Social Work Degree Apprenticeship Scheme, 24 successful candidates would start on this scheme, 9 within Children, Young People and Education and 15 within Adult Social Care and Health. Members congratulated the candidates on their success in achieving these roles and wished them all the best.

Cabinet Member for Economic Development:

- Tourism was hugely important to Kent and the Interreg experience project focussed on increasing off season overnight stays in Kent. This included partners from across England and France and was a further opportunity to allow Kent to continue with strong cross channel partnership. The Director of European Projects would visit Kent to better understand the positive impacts European Funding was having in Kent.

Cabinet Member for Environment:

- The Kent Biodiversity Strategy had been agreed by partners and would now go forward to Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee at the end of March. The Cabinet Member thanked the KCC Officers who had worked on this strategy which would hugely benefit Kent and District partners.

Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport:

- The Cabinet Member expressed his thanks to Kent Highways Staff and Contractors who had worked long hours recently in adverse conditions. More money had been allocated to the Capital expenditure and work was progressing to shape the HTMC contract to ensure a timely and cost-effective investment into Kent Highways.

Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services:

- Trading Standards Checks which was KCC's new online fair trader scheme was now live and recruiting traders, this replaced KCC's partnership with Check a Trade which formally ended on 31 March. There was due to be a formal launch in April 2020.

RESOLVED that Cabinet note the verbal updates from Cabinet Members.

135. 'Kent's Future, Our Priority' - Kent County Council's 5 Year Plan (Item 5)

David Whittle, (Director, Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance) and Liz Sanderson, (Strategic Business Adviser (Corporate)) were present for this item.

1. David Whittle explained that this document, although not statutory, sat at the top of KCC's policy framework with a purpose to provide the strategic aims and objectives of the organisation as determined by members. It helped inform, guide and shape the wider policy framework of the Council. Cabinet was asked to recommend the document to County Council for consideration and debate.
2. The document had been developed in a very open and collaborative way. It started with 3 day long resident workshops across East, West and North Kent, to explore the short and long term priorities for residents, their families and local communities. There was a strong alignment between member and resident feedback, this gave a strong starting base to help shape the document. Mr Whittle was grateful for the quality of engagement and support from across KCC.
3. The formal consultation process, which closed last week, had been very successful. The quality of responses has been significantly better than on previous consultations, particularly from other public body groups and these partners were vital for delivery.
4. Dependent on County Council approval there would be a formal launch on 30 March 2020, Mr Whittle offered thanks to colleagues, particularly to Simon Pleace in Finance who helped with residents' workshops, to his own team and to Liz Sanderson.
5. Liz Sanderson explained that it had been important to reflect back on where the outcomes and objectives had come from. At the end of last year there had been in depth discussions with residents, young people and businesses to consider why issues were important and to determine some general solutions. It had been challenging to balance different views but there had been a clear consensus around the key issues. There had been some clear feedback about the importance of culture, art, nature and heritage particularly for children and young people's

wellbeing. In addition, there was a focus on the importance of climate action and feeling safe in the county, particularly for young people.

6. The Leader expressed his thanks to Officers particularly Liz who had done a tremendous job.

7. Mr Hotson considered that he could not recall a policy document having so much involvement from partners and the community. It was encouraging to hear the support given by Kent districts and boroughs.

8. Ms Carey considered that this was a really good document and member engagement had been positive. There was a correction to be made around Plan Bee, which had been printed as Plan B in error.

9. The Leader confirmed the importance of 'you said, we did', the outcomes had been extremely important to everyone, Member engagement had been extremely valuable and Ms Rankin had put forward some detailed thoughts which had helped structure the document. Visible services were vital along with quality of life, housing and infrastructure and the relationship between the two.

10. Public protection services were very important, such as community wardens and their role in prevention, along with the voluntary and community sector to address issues that came out of the tackling social isolation work.

11. This document was about Kent, not any town in the UK, it was about the specific challenges and opportunities in this county.

12. Questioning how KCC would know if it was succeeding – this would not be just about generating a vast industry of PIs. This was about an ongoing resident dialogue, looking at outcomes and recognising the things that KCC controlled and those which it didn't but sought to influence.

RESOLVED that Cabinet

1. Note the findings of the engagement and consultation which have informed the changes to the 5 Year Plan, summarised in this report and set out in detail in the supporting '*You Said, We Did*' document.

2. Note the equalities considerations set out in the Equality Impact Assessment, which has been informed by the engagement and consultation process.

3. Agree to recommend to County Council that they approve 'Kent's Future, Our Priority' as the new 5 Year Plan for Kent County Council.

From: Clair Bell, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health
 Andrew Scott-Clark, Director of Public Health

To: Cabinet

Date: 23 March 2020

Subject: Suicide Prevention Programme update

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway: N/A

Future Pathway: N/A

Introduction:

This paper provides an update on the suicide prevention programme and includes;

- 1) the latest suicide statistics and commentary
- 2) a review of the 2015-2020 suicide prevention strategy and programme
- 3) a proposal regarding the 2020-2025 Suicide Prevention Strategy

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet Members are asked to provide comments and recommendations regarding any aspect of the suicide prevention programme.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Every death by suicide is a tragedy for the family and friends of the individual who died and the wider community. Since 2015 KCC's Public Health team has led the multi-agency suicide prevention strategy and programme across Kent and Medway.
- 1.2 This update provides Cabinet Members with;
 - 1) the latest suicide statistics and commentary
 - 2) a review of the 2015-2020 suicide prevention strategy and programme
 - 3) a proposal regarding the 2020-2025 Suicide Prevention Strategy

2. Latest suicide statistics

- 2.1 In November 2016, the then Secretary of State for Health Jeremy Hunt wrote to all local authorities highlighting their role in suicide prevention planning and the national target to reduce the numbers of suicides by 10% by 2020/21.

Statistics released in September 2019 indicate that the Kent rate is still higher than the national average, however local rates have fallen in recent years and are now much closer to the national average.

Table 1: 3 year rolling suicide rates per 100,000

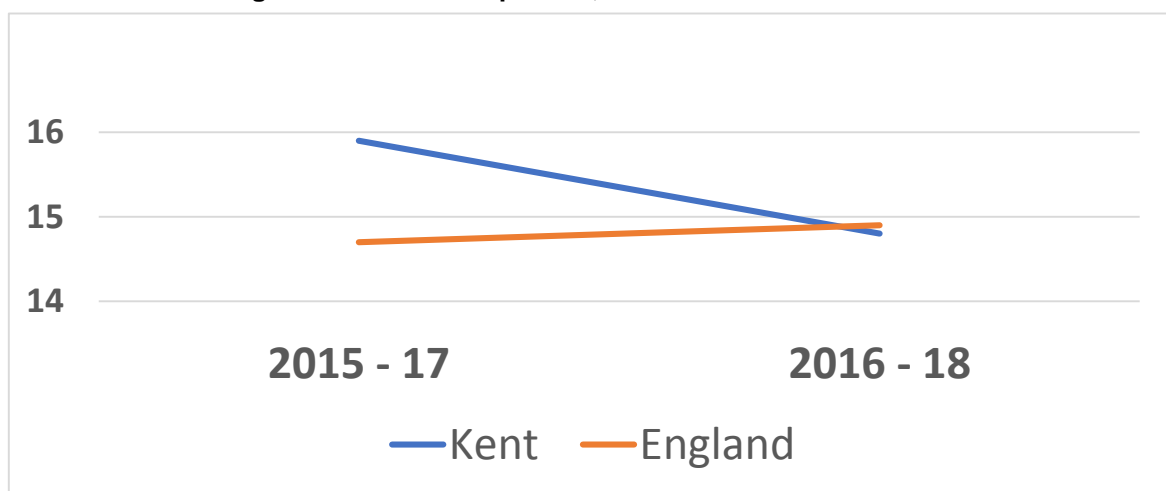
	13-15	14-16	15-17	2016-2018
ENGLAND	10.1	9.9	9.6	9.6
Kent	12.0	11.6	10.5	10.0

Source: ONS

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/datasets/suicidesbylocalauthority>

- 2.2 For the first time in several years, the male suicide rate in Kent is lower than the national average.

Chart 1 3-Year rolling male suicide rate per 100,000



Source – Public Health England <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile-group/mental-health/profile/suicide/data#page/4/gid/1938132828/pat/6/par/E12000008/ati/102/are/E10000016/iid/41001/age/285/sex/1>

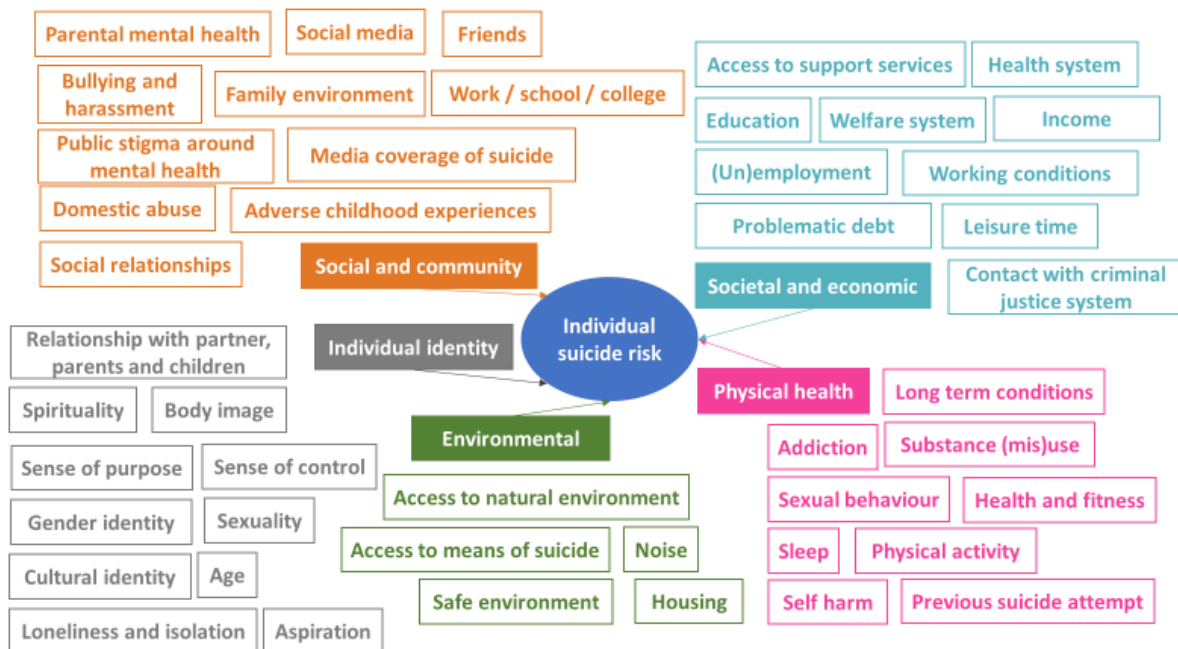
- 2.3 This 3-year rolling rate is what NHS England use to measure progress against the 10% national reduction target. This is the preferred measure because it is a more reliable statistic than comparing the relatively small numbers of suicides in any one particular year.
- 2.4 Every death by suicide is one too many, and while recent reductions in rates are to be welcomed, we are not complacent. KCC's Public Health team will continue to monitor all available data to ensure patterns and trends are identified and responded to with the ultimate aim of reducing the amount of people losing their lives to suicide in Kent as much as possible.
- 2.5 During 2018/19 research was conducted with the Coroners Service to try and establish what had been going on in the lives of people who died by suicide in the months and years before they died, with the ultimate aim of identifying opportunities for possible interventions.

2.6 A sample of 119 inquests were listened to, from a time period ranging from Jan 2017 to June 2018. Several common themes were identified;

- Middle aged men
- Substance misuse
- Debt
- Relationship breakdown
- Domestic abuse
- Previous self-harm
- Previous suicide attempt
- Bereavement
- Social isolation

2.7 This Kent specific research is consistent with national research findings which highlights the complex set of factors which can impact mental health and suicide risk

Figure 1 Complex factors influencing suicide risk in individuals (Adapted by KCC Public Health from PHE's 5-year Public Mental Health Framework 2020)



2.8 This research has led to a number of targeted projects and will continue to influence delivery during the next five-year strategy (2020-25).

3. A review of the 2015-2020 suicide prevention strategy and programme

3.1 When the current strategy was adopted in 2015, Kent's suicide rate was 12.0 per 100,000 compared to a national average of 10.1. Kent's rate has fallen during the period of the five-year strategy and is now much closer to the national average (Table 1 above). Given the complexity of factors which influence suicide risk in an individual (shown in Figure 1 above) it is impossible to prove a causal link between the Suicide Prevention Strategy

and falling rates, however we do believe that our activity has contributed to an environment where more people are thinking about their mental health, more people understand how to access help if they need it and more people are reaching out for support when they are struggling. We are also working closely with the mental health and substance misuse system to improve quality and outcomes for that vulnerable group. This includes work on Adverse Childhood Experiences and Trauma Informed Care both in Kent Children and Adults services.

3.2 The 2015-20 Strategy had six priorities (in Table 2 below) and each priority had a range of actions that were delivered by Public Health or partners.

Table 2: 2015-2020 Suicide Prevention Priorities

2015-2020 Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Priorities	
1	Reduce the risk of suicide and self-harm in high risk groups
2	Tailor approaches to improve mental health and wellbeing in Kent and Medway
3	Reduce access to the means of suicide
4	Provide better information and support to those bereaved by suicide
5	Support the media in delivering sensitive approaches to suicide
6	Support research, data collection and monitoring

3.3 Highlights of delivery over the last five years have included;

- Launching the award winning Release the Pressure social marketing campaign in 2016
 - Over 100,000 calls to the 24-hour support line at the heart of the campaign
 - Over 115,000 visits to the campaign web pages
 - Over 1000 webchats
- 1102 people completing Mental Health First Aid 3hr training
- Over 4000 people completing Suicide Prevention 3hr training
- 617 people completing Suicide Prevention e-learning
- 50 community level suicide prevention projects supported through the Saving Lives Innovation Fund
- Supporting the development of new Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide groups
- A network of Men's Sheds across the county
- Research into
 - Suicide amongst prisoners
 - Suicide amongst older people
 - Debt and suicide
 - Domestic abuse and suicide

- Annual suicide data audits
 - In-depth Coroner audit
 - Help-seeking behaviour amongst men
- 3.4 Much of the activity above was made possible by funding provided by NHS England in 2018/19 and 19/20. This funding is continuing at a reduced rate (a 48% reduction) in 2020/21 but then is being removed from 2021/22 onwards.
- 3.5 However, while the funding has been important and helpful, significant progress has also been made as a result of system leadership projects. These projects have included;
- Improving quality and safety for individuals with co-occurring conditions (e.g. a multi-disciplinary team approach pilot in West Kent)
 - Increasing community level engagement with, and ownership of, mental health issues (e.g. the 2019 Thanet Mental Health Summit)
 - Increasing system wide understanding of how to respond to self-harm and suicidality in children and young people (eg by working with the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership on a Thematic Review and by publishing new guidance materials)
 - The adoption of a multi-agency Suicide Cluster Identification and Response Protocol
 - Postvention support to schools, universities, prisons and workplaces after incidents
 - Working with a wide range of local authority, health and private sector organisations to develop their individual suicide prevention programmes
 - Adverse Childhood Experiences and Trauma Informed Care embedded into a range of adults and children's services.
- 3.6 Monitoring and evaluation has been a crucial feature of all our activity. This has allowed us to understand where interventions are having an impact and where we may need to make changes. While proving a direct causal impact with falling rates at a population level is difficult, our evaluations (both quantitative and qualitative) give us further confidence that our programme of work is having an impact and we are making a significant difference to the lives that we touch.
- 3.7 It is important to highlight that suicide is not an issue that Public Health can respond to on its own. Much of the strength of the delivery over the last five years is as a result of internal and external partners. The Steering Group that Public Health Chairs and facilitates has over 130 different organisations and individuals represented. These include health partners (such as CCGs, KMPT and NELFT), charities (such as MIND and Samaritans), agencies (such as Kent Police, Network Rail and Highways England) and importantly individuals who have been bereaved by suicide or who have attempted suicide. There is also a suicide prevention strategic group within the mental health provider trust which links to the overarching KCC led strategy. In time

it is hoped that learning from deaths and serious incidents relating to suicide and attempted suicide will be shared across the system more consistently.

- 3.8 Internally a wide number of KCC divisions and teams have supported this work. These are a few examples;

Adult Social Care

- Co-commissioning Live Well and Mental Health Matters
- Mental Health Social Workers
- AHMPs working with KMPT and Kent Police to improve Sect 136 usage

Growth, Environment and Transport

- Community Safety now including deaths by suicide in Domestic Homicide Reviews
- Highways team working with Highways England on design of new motorway bridges
- Coroners supporting the in-depth review of suicide inquests
- Countryside Partnerships and Country Parks supporting volunteering programmes for people with mental health issues

Children Young People and Education

- Post-vention support in schools
- HeadStart emotional resilience programme for young people
- Working with Kent Safeguarding Children Multi Agency Partnership on a Thematic Review and guidance documents

Strategic and Corporate Services

- HR/OD further strengthening KCC's internal commitment to mental health and wellbeing. For instance, signing the Time to Change pledge, and setting up the new Mental Health Network for staff
- Strategic Commissioning raising the profile of mental health with commissioned providers, including encouraging take up of suicide prevention training
- Substance misuse commissioners embedding Trauma Informed Care and mental well-being in commissioning intentions and working across the whole system for mental health regarding co-occurring conditions.

- 3.9 All directorates have encouraged and supported staff to complete a range of mental health and suicide prevention training, and many divisions have had mental wellbeing as a focus at staff away days.

- 3.10 As well as making an impact locally, Kent's Suicide Prevention programme has also been recognised nationally.

- The Release the Pressure campaign imagery has now been adopted by several other local authorities and has appeared on London tube trains and even parts of New Zealand
- The team are regularly asked to present at national conferences

- The Programme Manager, Tim Woodhouse, has been invited on to the Steering Group of the National Suicide Prevention Alliance as their only local authority representative
- The Programme won two national awards in 2019 including in the prestigious Health Sector Journal “Health and Local Government Partnership” category

4. A proposal regarding the 2020-2025 Suicide Prevention Strategy

- 4.1 The current Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Strategy runs to 2020 and therefore Public Health are currently preparing the draft 2020-2025 Strategy for consultation later in the spring.
- 4.2 The consultation for the new strategy will include a full review of the previous five years, as well as consider changes to national priorities.
- 4.3 Recent updates to national guidance suggest an increased focus on self-harm would be beneficial, as would stronger support for families bereaved by suicide.
- 4.4 Local evidence suggests that links with substance misuse, domestic abuse and suicides amongst teenagers will require additional scrutiny.
- 4.5 Despite these changes in the detail (and others that emerge during consultation), the overarching priorities are likely to remain the same.

Table 3: Proposed 2020-2025 Suicide Prevention Priorities

Proposed 2020-2025 Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Priorities	
1	Reduce the risk of suicide and self-harm in high risk groups
2	Tailor approaches to improve mental health and wellbeing in Kent and Medway
3	Reduce access to the means of suicide
4	Provide better information and support to those bereaved by suicide
5	Support the media in delivering sensitive approaches to suicide
6	Support research, data collection and monitoring

- 4.6 Governance arrangements for the new strategy will include regular reporting to KCC and Medway Council Cabinet Committees, as well as to the Kent and Medway Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 4.7 Public Health are working with KCC’s Engagement and Consultation Team to design an appropriate consultation schedule. This is likely to start in April and conclude in June 2020.

5. Recommendation(s)

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet Members are asked to provide comments and recommendations regarding any aspect of the suicide prevention programme.

6. Contact details

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From: Ben Watts, General Counsel
To: Cabinet – 27 April 2020
Subject: Governance Update on Virtual Meetings - The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) England and Wales) Regulations 2020 - SI 2020 392
Classification: Unrestricted

1. Introduction

- (a) In line with provisions in the Coronavirus Act, regulations have come into force giving local authorities the ability to take a more flexible approach to holding meetings. However, it is not as straightforward as simply being able to include all Members of a Committee on a conference call and deem that a meeting.
- (b) Notice still needs to be given for meetings and the Agendas need to be made available online. The public's right to observe meetings remains the same and so provision needs to be made for the public to hear the discussion and see it where possible as well.
- (c) The regulations are written so that each local authority can tailor their ability to hold virtual meetings to the technology they are able to put into place. Thought needs to be given to how best to use the technology to ensure the business of the Council can be conducted fairly and without any participant or observer being unduly disadvantaged.
- (d) Formal meetings held virtually are still formal meetings, and while the procedures and rules remain the same as when all Members are present in the same room, it will be a different way of working.
- (e) Government has expressed a clear view through their communication on lockdown around the importance to avoid meeting in person. Over the past month, my staff have been testing a range of solutions to facilitate wholly virtual meetings. We will continue to refine processes and procedures to improve the experience of attendees and viewer alike in the coming weeks and months.
- (f) It is my view that the formal Constitution does not need changing. The regulations state that any standing orders that a Council may have are superseded by the change in law. This would be the case anyway when the law changes and this is captured in section 6.2 of the Constitution. Given that these changes are only temporary, we would risk having a Constitution that required amending almost as soon as we amended it to take these regulations into account.

- (g) Similarly, the Constitution provides me, in my capacity as Monitoring Officer, with discretions around Governance that may be necessary to exercise in the current emergency and in the creation of virtual meetings. I will keep all Members updated regarding these and will provide a full Governance update to the next County Council meeting (virtual or otherwise) in relation to any use of such discretion or delegation.
- (h) We will be working to arrange a number of virtual meetings over the coming weeks and months based on organisational need. Members are asked to specifically note the impact of dealing with the current COVID-19 emergency on the availability of officers to draft papers and attend meetings.

2. Protocols for Virtual Meetings

- (a) Kent County Council has a more streamlined and flexible Constitution compared to many similar authorities and our way forward is that each Committee will adopt a set of supplementary protocols to guide how virtual meetings will be run. This will enable Members to have a common point of reference and to understand how business will be conducted. For members of the public observing our virtual meetings, this will improve transparency and understanding of the democratic process.
- (b) The Council already has in place a robust set of policies and procedures around urgent decision-making and this system will continue to operate alongside the virtual meetings we arrange.

3. Recommendation:

That the Cabinet:

- (a) note the report; and**
- (b) agree the Protocols.**

4. Background Documents

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) England and Wales) Regulations 2020 - SI 2020 392, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2020/392/contents/made>

5. Contact details

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Draft – Protocol for Meetings held under SI 2020 392

General

1. Part Three of the Constitution (Standing Orders) shall continue to apply for all virtual meetings except where there is a requirement, implied or otherwise, for Members to be physically present in the same location.
2. These Protocols supplement but do not replace the Standing Orders in the Constitution and exist to make meetings held under SI 2020 392 more effective and efficient.
3. Reference to Chairman or Clerk relate to the Chairman or Clerk of the specific virtual meeting.
4. The Monitoring Officer or his deputies are available to assist and advise the Chairman and the Clerk as necessary.
5. Members are respectfully reminded to ensure that the electronic device through which they are attending the virtual meeting has sufficient battery charge.

Rules of Conduct

6. The Chairman's ruling on the meaning or application of these Protocols or any other aspect of the proceedings of a meeting held virtually cannot be challenged.
7. The Chairman may give any direction, or vary these Protocols, when they consider it appropriate to do so in order to allow for the effective and democratic management of the meeting but must take advice from the Clerk before so doing.
8. Immediately before the commencement of the virtual meeting, all participants must switch the video and microphone settings to "off" and only turn them on when indicated to speak by the Chairman.
9. Members are reminded that any member of the public may observe the meeting.
10. The conversation function referred to in the Protocols is also known as the 'meeting chat'. Members should proceed as if the content can be viewed by participants and the wider public and only use the function for procedural matters as set out below. It should not be used to discuss the substantive issue – this should be done verbally.

Attendance

11. Members must affirm their presence by typing the word 'Present' in the conversation function of the meeting. This shall be accepted by the Clerk as the equivalent of the Member having signed the attendance list.
12. Where a Member is leaving the meeting permanently or temporarily, the word 'Absent' shall be typed in the conversation function. Where the Member joins the meeting once more, 'Present' shall be typed once more.
13. Where a Member has declared a DPI or other interest which means they need to absent themselves for part of the meeting, the Member shall leave the meeting completely at the appropriate time. The Clerk shall email the Member when they are able to re-join. The Clerk will confirm the absence by checking the meeting attendees and confirming the same to the Chairman.
14. The standard quorum of one third of the total voting membership applies and this number must have indicated they are 'Present' for the meeting to commence or continue. The Clerk will conduct electronic checks on quoracy periodically throughout the meeting.

Substitutes

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15. In order to ensure that Members have access to the virtual meeting, it is requested that formal notification of substitutes to the Clerk be made at least 48 hours prior to the start of the meeting. The start time of the meeting will be affected if this is not done.

Speaking

16. Members and other participants in the meeting must wait to be called on by the Chair before speaking.
17. Attendees may indicate a desire to speak through use of the conversation function. The Clerk will ensure these are brought to the attention of the Chair in the order received.
18. Members not part of the Committee wishing to speak shall request permission from the Chair in advance so that the Clerk is informed 24-hours ahead of the meeting.

Motions and Amendments

19. Except where the motion before the Committee is set out in the Agenda, any Member is entitled to request that a motion or amendment before the Committee be typed out in the conversation function by the proposer. Where this is done, the Clerk shall read out the motion/amendment.
20. All proposed motions/amendments will need to be seconded by a Committee Member present in line with usual practice.
21. The Chair shall ask for Member's views on the motion/amendment. Where the view of the Committee is unclear, the Chair shall call for a vote.

Voting

22. Voting will be through a poll overseen by the Clerk through the conversation function, with the Clerk announcing whether the motion/amendment was agreed or not agreed once this has concluded.
23. Where a poll is not able to take place, the Chair shall ask Members to record whether they are for, against, or abstaining in the conversation function. No response shall be taken as an abstention.
24. No votes shall be recorded in the Minutes unless sections 16.31 or 16.32 of the Constitution apply.

Clerking

25. There will normally be a minimum of two Officers supporting the Chair and Committee during a virtual meeting. One will act as a facilitator to support the Chair. The other will be taking minutes.

Other Provisions

26. Where the minimum legal requirements apply and Members are only able to hear each other and be heard, the Chair shall be responsible for identifying speakers etc., and will be supported in this by the Clerk as facilitator. A rollcall shall be held at the start of the meeting, and at other times as deemed necessary by the Chair, to establish quoracy in these circumstances.

Part Two Meetings

27. At the start of any formal meeting, or part of any formal meeting, from which the press and public have been excluded in accordance with section 15.17 of the Constitution, Members

shall type the words 'Present - Alone' to verify that no unauthorised person is able to hear, see, or otherwise participate in the meeting.

28. A Part Two meeting will normally be anticipated and will be scheduled in advance as a separate virtual meeting. Where the need to move into a Part Two meeting only becomes apparent during the meeting, the item affected should be adjourned to a later date.

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