

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Kent County Council held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 17 October 2019.

PRESENT:

Mrs A D Allen, MBE (Chairman)
Mr G K Gibbens (Vice-Chairman)

Mr M J Angell, Mr M A C Balfour, Mr P V Barrington-King, Mrs C Bell,
Mrs P M Beresford, Mrs R Binks, Mr R H Bird, Mr T Bond, Mr A Booth,
Mr A H T Bowles, Mr D L Brazier, Mr J Burden, Mr D Butler, Miss S J Carey,
Mr P B Carter, CBE, Mrs S Chandler, Mr N J D Chard, Mr I S Chittenden,
Mr J Clinch, Mrs P T Cole, Mr N J Collor, Ms K Constantine, Mr A Cook,
Mr G Cooke, Mr P C Cooper, Mrs M E Crabtree, Mr D S Daley, Mr M C Dance,
Miss E Dawson, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mr D Farrell, Mrs L Game, Mr R W Gough,
Ms S Hamilton, Mr P M Harman, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr A R Hills, Mrs S V Hohler,
Mr S Holden, Mr P J Homewood, Mr E E C Hotson, Mrs L Hurst, Mr J A Kite, MBE,
Mr P W A Lake, Mr B H Lewis, Mr R L H Long, TD, Mr R C Love, OBE, Mr G Lymer,
Mr R A Marsh, Ms D Marsh, Mr J P McInroy, Mr P J Messenger, Mr D D Monk,
Mr D Murphy, Mr M J Northey, Mr P J Oakford, Mr J M Ozog, Mr R A Pascoe,
Mr M D Payne, Mrs S Prendergast, Miss C Rankin, Mr H Rayner, Mr A M Ridgers,
Mr C Simkins, Mrs P A V Stockell, Dr L Sullivan, Mr B J Sweetland, Mr R J Thomas,
Mr M Whiting, Mr M E Whybrow and Mr J Wright

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs A Beer (Corporate Director of People and Communications),
Mr D Cockburn (Corporate Director Strategic & Corporate Services), Mrs B Cooper
(Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport), Mr M Dunkley CBE
(Corporate Director for Children Young People and Education), Mr A Scott-Clark
(Director of Public Health), Mr D Shipton (Head of Finance - Planning, Policy &
Strategy - and Acting Section 151 Officer), Ms P Southern (Corporate Director, Adult
Social Care and Health) and Mr B Watts (General Counsel)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

168. Apologies for Absence

The General Counsel reported apologies from Mr P Bartlett, Mr M Horwood, Mr A Hook, Mr G Koowaree, Ida Linfield, Mr S Manion, Mr K Pugh and Mr I Thomas.

169. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Significant Interests in items on the agenda

(1) Dr Sullivan declared an interest, as her husband was employed by the County Council in the Early Help and Prevention Team.

(2) Mr Lewis declared an interest as his wife was employed by the County Council.

170. Minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2019 and, if in order, to be approved as a correct record

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2019 be approved as a correct record and they be signed by the Chairman.

171. Corporate Parenting Panel - minutes for noting

RESOLVED that the minutes from the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel on 25 July 2019 be noted.

172. Chairman's Announcements

Mr John Fullarton

(1) The Chairman stated that it was with regret that she had to inform Members of the death of Mr John Fullarton, former Conservative Member for Broadstairs & Sir Moses Montefiore from 1997 to 2009.

(2) Mrs Binks and Mrs Dean paid tribute to Mr Fullarton.

Dr Tony Robinson

(3) The Chairman stated that it was with regret that she had to inform Members of the death of Dr Tony Robinson, former Conservative Member for Tonbridge West from 1997 to 2009. During his time at Kent County Council, Dr Robinson was the first Chairman of the Kent Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

(4) Mr Lake, Mr Long and Mrs Dean paid tribute to Dr Robinson.

(5) Following all of the tributes, all Members stood in silence in memory of Mr Fullarton and Dr Robinson.

(6) After the one-minute silence, the Chairman moved, the Vice-Chairman seconded, and it was resolved unanimously that:

“This Council records the sense of loss it feels on the sad passing of Mr Fullarton and Dr Robinson and extends to their family and friends our heartfelt sympathy to them in their sad bereavements.”

Suicide Prevention Programme award

(7) The Chairman congratulated the Kent and Medway Sustainability and Transformation Partnership Suicide Prevention team for their success in the National Positive Practice in Mental Health Awards, as the winners of the All Age Crisis and Acute Care category, and runners-up in the Suicide Prevention category.

New £20 note and the Turner Contemporary

(8) The Chairman informed Members that the new £20 note, which would be issued on 20 February 2020, featured J.M.W Turner and depicted the Turner Contemporary.

173. Questions

In accordance with Procedure Rule 1.17(4), 5 questions were asked and replies given. A record of all questions put and answers given at the meeting are available [online](#) with the papers for this meeting.

174. Strategic Statement Annual Report 2019

Mr Carter moved, and Mr Hotson seconded the following motion:

“County Council is asked to note and comment on the *Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes* Strategic Statement Annual Report 2019”

(2) Following the debate, the motion set out above was agreed without a formal vote.

(3) RESOLVED that the *Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes* Strategic Statement Annual Report 2019 and the comments made by Members be noted.

175. Report by the Leader of the Council (Oral)

(1) The Leader referred to his first speech as Leader of Kent County Council in 2005. He reflected on some of the significant changes that had taken place in the 14 years since he was elected Leader of the Council.

(2) He stated that the last 8 to 10 years had been very much affected by the era of austerity. He had compared some of the statistics that were around 14 years ago to now and the current net revenue budget of this Authority was almost identical to what it was 8 to 9 years ago when austerity started which was quite extraordinary. KCC delivered a complex array of people-based services with the same amount of money that it received 7 to 8 years ago. This was an enormous credit to all involved, especially Members working together with officers.

(3) Mr Carter referred to the substantial growth in reserves over the past 14 years and also the pension fund which over the past 8 – 9 years had probably grown faster than any other Local Government Pension fund.

(4) Mr Carter made reference to the next years budget and stated that with a little bit of his influence Local Government had got a one-year settlement and he hoped that there would soon be a Medium-Term settlement.

(5) Mr Carter highlighted the importance of having a well-motivated staff and mentioned the introduction of performance reward for staff. He emphasised the importance of KCC’s “can-do” approach.

(6) In relation to localism, Mr Carter referred to the lack of devolution to local government. He gave the example of the Regional Schools Commissioner and the extension of the academisation programme across the county.

(7) Mr Carter confirmed that he was a great believer in business/local government partnerships but considered that Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) were not as effective as the previous Local Transport Plan allocation process.

(8) Mr Carter referred to the good progress made with KCC's traded services division, commercial services and other LATCO's and was pleased that after some initial issues these were doing well.

(9) Although Mr Carter considered that KCC had moved ahead in the procurement and commissioning process he expressed the view that more needed to be done to measure how those services were actually being delivered. He gave the example of increased SEN spending achieving less customer satisfaction and the need to work on putting the customer first.

(10) When he became leader in 2005, Mr Carter stated that he had raised the possibility of investing and re-investing in KCC's capital real estate and the establishment of a property company. He explained how he believed this could still be achieved.

(11) In conclusion Mr Carter stated that he was enormously proud of KCC's achievements and expressed his thanks to all those involved.

(12) Mr Bird, the Leader of the Opposition, congratulated Mr Carter on his service and achievements as Leader of Kent County Council and the level of support he had provided for Kent County Council's staff and the residents of Kent. Mr Bird commended Mr Carter's approach to putting Kent first and supporting Kent's most vulnerable and disadvantaged residents.

(13) Mr Bird stated that local authorities had borne the brunt of government cuts and he acknowledged Mr Carter's determination, tenacity and willingness to take tough decisions.

(14) Mr Bird referred to the most significant challenges facing Mr Carter's successor. These included the integration of health and social care, the improvement of vocational education and training, tackling climate change, protecting the environment and encouraging biodiversity, tackling inequalities within Kent and ensuring that Kent's carers were well supported and had respite breaks.

(15) Mr Bird thanked Mr Carter for his past 14 years of service as Leader of the Council.

(16) Mr Farrell, Leader of the Labour Group, emphasised the importance of investing in vocational training and supporting post-16 education in Kent which had been dramatically reduced.

(17) Mr Farrell commended Mr Carter's desire to work to improve the NHS and particularly apprenticeships. He sought Mr Carter's support for the reinstatement of

nursing bursaries in a bid to increase the number of nursing and midwifery course applications.

(18) Mr Farrell congratulated Mr Carter on his service and achievements as Leader of Kent County Council and commended his pragmatic outcome focused approach to the challenges that Kent had been faced with over recent years.

(19) Mr Whybrow, Leader of the Independents Group, supported Mr Bird and Mr Farrell's comments in relation to Mr Carter's Leadership. He expressed his thanks to Kent County Council's officers for the hard work undertaken to ensure that the Council continued to provide vital services to its residents during challenging financial times.

(20) Mr Whybrow referred to Mr Carter's passion for ensuring that every young person in Kent had the best start possible which included support for further education and apprenticeships. One of Mr Carter's last duties as Leader had been to present awards to 22 Kent County Council employees who had completed apprenticeships.

(21) Mr Whybrow stated that Mr Carter had always been very fair and open in his dealings with the opposition. He commended Mr Carter for being a champion for KCC and the whole of local government through his involvement with the County Councils Network.

(22) In relation to the challenges facing the new Leader, Mr Whybrow referred to the need to focus on post-16 education, to ensure that young people had the right skills for the future and he believed that environmental issues should have a higher profile.

(23) Mr Hotson, Mr Love, Mr Oakford, Mr Holden, Mr Lewis, Mr Kite, Mrs Dean and the Chairman paid tribute to Mr Carter in his capacity as Leader of the Council.

(24) Mr Carter thanked the other Leaders of the Opposition groups and Members for their kind and supportive words.

(25) Mr Carter stated that he was proud of his achievements as Leader of the Council and had thoroughly enjoyed the past 14 years as Leader of Kent County Council.

(26) Mr Carter formally resigned as Leader of the Council.