

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Friday, 8 November 2019

PRESENT: Mr B J Sweetland (Chairman), Mr R A Marsh (Vice-Chairman), Mr P V Barrington-King, Mr R H Bird, Mr N J D Chard, Mr G Cooke, Mrs M E Crabtree, Mr D Farrell, Mr M D Payne, Mr H Rayner and Mr I Thomas

ALSO PRESENT: Mr M J Angell, Mr M A C Balfour, Mr R W Gough, Mr P M Hill, OBE and Mr P J Oakford

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr M Bridger (Commissioning Standards Programme Manager), Mr P Bruinvels (KCC Civilian-Military Liaison Adviser and Military Expert), Mr A Chauvin (Capital Commissioning Consultant), Mr D Cockburn (Corporate Director Strategic & Corporate Services), Mr A Cole (Head of Technology Commissioning & Strategy), Ms D Exall (Strategic Relationship Adviser), Mr D Firth (Policy Adviser), Mr V Godfrey (Strategic Commissioner), Sanderson (Capital Programme Strategy Manager), Mrs R Spore (Director of Infrastructure), Mr B Watts (General Counsel), Mr D Whittle (Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance) and Miss E West (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

192. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item 2)

Apologies for absence had been received from Mr Murphy, Mr Lake and Mrs Dean.

193. Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda

(Item 3)

Mr Thomas declared an interest as he was the Chairman of the Planning Committee at Canterbury City Council.

194. Minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2019

(Item 4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee meeting held on 20 September 2019 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

195. Review of Voluntary and Community Sector policy

(Item 5)

Ms Jackson (Policy & Relationships Adviser (VCS)), Mr Whittle (Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance), Mr Scott-Clark (Director of Public Health) and Mr Hill (Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services) were in attendance for this item.

- (1) Mr Hill and Mr Whittle introduced the report which set out the proposal to refresh the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) policy into a new Civil Society strategy for Kent and the intention to go out to formal consultation in the new year.

Officers then responded to comments and questions from Members, including the following: -

- a) Ms Jackson said that the proposal to refresh the VCS policy would broaden Kent County Council's relationship with smaller organisations and ensure that grants were accessible and transparent to a wide range of VCS organisations. Mr Whittle reiterated Ms Jackson's comments and emphasised the importance of engaging with the wider sector and facilitating information sharing.
- b) Mr Scott-Clark said that Kent's districts and boroughs and the health sector were responsible for developing the VCS, in partnership with Kent County Council.
- c) Mr Whittle said that Member's feedback in relation to the name of the new strategy was noted.

- (2) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

196. Enterprise Business Capabilities (EBC)

(Item 6)

Mr Godfrey (Strategic Commissioner) was in attendance for this item.

- (1) Mr Oakford Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services) and Mr Godfrey introduced the report which set out information relating to Kent County Council's aim to modernise its Enterprise Business Capabilities (EBC) covering finance, human resources, payroll, and procurement, including the replacement of its Oracle software (£1.2m per annum).

Mr Godfrey then responded to comments and questions from Members, including the following: -

- a) Mr Godfrey referred to the risks that were involved in relation to technology projects and emphasised the importance of mitigating risks and ensuring that programmes were robust.
- b) Mr Godfrey stated that he was the accountable Senior Officers for commissioning the project. He added that a Technology Board monitored the project to ensure that decisions were considered as part of Kent County Council's overall approach to technology.
- c) Mr Cockburn emphasised the importance of clarity and transparency in relation to the project's engagement process, carefully assessing need and taking advantage of new technology.

- d) Mr Godfrey stated that market research exercises were being undertaken in relation to the alternative products that were available.
 - e) Mr Godfrey confirmed that Kent County Council had invested heavily in Microsoft products and had had a successful deployment of Oracle Cloud which was progressing well. He added that further work would be undertaken to assess ways in which the Council could further leverage and develop the current arrangements that were in place in relation to Microsoft and Azure.
 - f) Mr Godfrey said that positive conversations would take place with Kent's neighbouring local authorities in relation to potential collaboration.
- (2) Mr Godfrey confirmed that a further report relating to the Council's Enterprise Business Capabilities would be brought back to the Committee in March 2020.
- (3) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

197. Annual Report on the Implementation of the Armed Forces Covenant in Kent

(Item 7)

Mr Bruinvelds (Kent County Council Civilian-Military Liaison Adviser and Military Expert), Ms Exall (Strategic Relationship Adviser) and Mr Angell (Kent County Council Member for Ashford Rural South and Armed Forces Champion) were in attendance for this item.

- (1) Mr Angell and Ms Exall introduced the report which provided information on Kent County Council's work to support Kent's Armed Forces community, summarising key achievements since the report to County Council in 2018, and sought Members' support for the proposed future actions.
- (2) Mr Bruinvelds provided Members with a document titled '*How to embed the Armed Forces and Covenant within your Local Authority*' for their information.

Officers then responded to comments and questions from Members, including the following: -

- a) Ms Exall stated that whilst the exact number of ex-military staff that were working within Kent County Council was unknown, Kent County Council actively worked with the military to promote Kent County Council as an employer of choice for individuals that were leaving the service. Mr Bruinvelds added that 67 members of staff within Kent County Council were committed to supporting the military.
- b) Ms Exall referred to the work that had been undertaken between Kent County Council and Kent's district and borough councils in relation to Armed Forces housing and stated that a subgroup of the Kent Housing Group focused specifically on supporting veterans. Mr Bruinvelds said that the Royal British Legion Industries village in Aylesford provided housing, welfare support and care to many members of the Armed Forces community.

- c) Mr Bruinvels said that approximately 4% of individual's in custody and on community orders nationally were ex-armed service personnel, although this figure also included those that worked as prison officers. He added that Kent County Council worked closely with Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association (SSAFA), a charity that provided lifelong support to serving men and women and veterans from the British Armed Forces and their families or dependents. Kent SSAFA operated and supported a court diversion scheme that would prevent ex-armed service personnel from going to prison in the first instance.
- d) Mr Bruinvels referred to the wide variety of benefits that were available for armed forces personnel, their dependents and survivors in the USA. He said that a Defence Privilege Card was available in the UK through the Defence Discount Service for Veterans and the Armed Forces Community.
- e) Mr Bruinvels confirmed that of the 77,000 veterans residing in Kent, approximately 7,500 to 8,000 were in receipt of a War Pension or War Disablement Allowance.
- f) Mr Bruinvels referred to the recent Forces Connect training sessions in Dover and Canterbury and emphasised the importance in supporting homeless veterans by working closely with housing officers in Kent.
- g) Mr Bruinvels confirmed that training was in place, led by himself and Kate Parkin, Armed Forces Director for Sussex and Kent & Medway Armed Forces Networks, to identify veterans and support veterans with mental health issues.
- h) Mr Angell stated that Kent County Council were working closely with armed forces representatives to target young people and encourage them to join the armed forces.
- i) Ms Exall referred to section 2.12 of the report and confirmed that a programme of community integration would be put in place in 2020 to support families coming into the UK from Brunei.
- j) Mr Bruinvels confirmed that Kent County Council were undertaking employment policy work to ensure that partners of ex-service personnel were not penalised.

(3) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

198. Strategic Delivery Plan Monitoring: Quarter 2 2019/20

(Item 8)

Mr Gough (Leader of the Council), Mr Whittle (Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance) and Mr Firth (Policy Adviser) were in attendance for this item

- (1) Mr Gough introduced the report which provided an overview of the Council's Strategic Delivery Plan Monitoring arrangements and the analysis and emerging themes from Quarter 2 2019/20 submissions.

Officers then responded to comments and questions from Members, including the following: -

- a) Mr Whittle confirmed that the Strategic Delivery Plan Monitoring item would be submitted to Cabinet Committee meetings every six months.
- (2) It was suggested and generally agreed that future items on Strategic Delivery Plan activities be brought back to future meetings of the Committee.
- (3) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

199. Contract Management (Item 9)

Mr Godfrey (Strategic Commissioner) and Mr Bridger (Commissioning Standards Programme Manager) were in attendance for this item

- (1) Mr Oakford (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services) and Mr Godfrey introduced the report which provided an update on the work of the Contract Management Review Group (CMRG) over the past six months, as well as work more broadly to improve contract management practice across the Council.
- (2) Mr Watts confirmed that issues relating to buildings owned by Kent County Council would be addressed through regular Total Facilities Management reports that were submitted to Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee meetings.
- (3) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

200. Work Programme 2019/20 (Item 10)

RESOLVED that the work programme be noted, subject to the inclusion of the following items:

- Strategic Delivery Plan Monitoring (bi-annual)
- Enterprise Business Capabilities (March 2020)
- Delivery of the Disposals Programme
- Delivering a business case for Property Development Arrangements

201. Exclusion of the Press and Public (Item)

RESOLVED that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following business as it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Exempt Items
(open access to minutes)

202. 19/00077 - Barton Court Free School - Building Contract

(Item 11)

Mrs Spore (Director of Infrastructure), Mr Sanderson (Capital Programme Strategy Manager) and Mr Chauvin (Capital Commissioning Consultant) were in attendance for this item

- (1) Mr Oakford (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services) and Mrs Spore introduced the report which set out information relating to letting of the building contract for the Barton Court Academy Trust Free School Project in Canterbury.
 - a) Mrs Spore and Mr Watts then responded to comments and questions from Members which related to Kier's performance as a contractor, projected delivery costs, the risks associated with the projects delivery and how the risks could be mitigated.
- (2) In the information set out within the report about sources of funding, Mrs Spore corrected one entry.
- (3) RESOLVED that the proposed decision to be taken by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services to approve the award of building contracts to Kier Construction Limited for the Barton Court Free School be noted, and authority be delegated to the Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services to finalise the contractual terms and enter into any necessary documentation including land sale and development agreements, be endorsed.

203. 19/00080 - Disposal of the Former Sittingbourne AEC and land to the rear, College Road, Sittingbourne, ME10 1LF

(Item 12)

Mrs Spore (Director of Infrastructure) was in attendance for this item

- (1) Mrs Spore introduced the report which set out information relating to the proposed disposal of the former Sittingbourne Adult Education Centre (AEC) and land to the rear, in Sittingbourne.
- (2) RESOLVED that the proposed decision to be taken by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services to:
 - a) sell the former Sittingbourne AEC and land to the rear on the terms set out in the accompanying exempt report; and
 - b) delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure to progress with and enter into the necessary documentation and legal agreements required to implement the decision,

be endorsed.

204. Cyber Security

(Item 13)

Mrs Spore (Director of Infrastructure) and Mr Cole (Head of Technology Commissioning & Strategy) were in attendance for this item

- (1) Mr Oakford (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services) and Mr Cole introduced the report which set out information relating to Kent County Council's current approach to cyber security.
 - a) Officers then responded to comments and questions from Members which related to the improvements that could be made to Cyber Security within Kent County Council, levels of achievement, the costs attached to Cyber Security, the impact on Cyber-attacks and how best to mitigate risks.
 - b) Mrs Spore confirmed that a briefing note could be distributed to Committee Members, or a Member's briefing held, to provide further information in relation to Cyber Security within Kent County Council.
- (2) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

205. Invicta Law - Update

(Item 14)

- (1) Mr Oakford (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services) and Mr Watts introduced the report which provided an update in relation to the commissioning arrangements for Invicta Law.
 - a) Mr Watts then responded to comments and questions from Members which set out information relating to customer satisfaction, contract arrangements, key statistical issues, resources and the advantages of the contract.
 - b) Mr Watts confirmed that a further Invicta Law report would be submitted to the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee meeting in January 2020.
- (2) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

206. 19/00072 - Oakwood House Redevelopment

(Item 15)

Mrs Spore (Director of Infrastructure) and Mr Sanderson (Capital Programme Strategy Manager) were in attendance for this item

- (1) Mr Oakford (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services) and Mrs Spore introduced the report which set out information relating to the proposed decision to progress with Oakwood House re-development as set out in the exempt report.
- (2) Mrs Spore confirmed that an update on the Oakwood House re-development would be brought back to the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee in March 2020.

- (3) RESOLVED that the proposed decision to be taken by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services to progress with Oakwood House re-development as set out in the exempt report, be endorsed.

(Mr R Bird asked that his vote against the recommendation be recorded in the minutes)