

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT CABINET COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee held in the Darent Room - Sessions House on Friday, 24 May 2019.

PRESENT: Mr M A C Balfour (Chairman), Mr M D Payne (Vice-Chairman), Ms S Hamilton (Substitute for Mr T Bond), Mr D L Brazier, Mr A Cook, Mr N J Collor, Mr S Holden, Mr A R Hills, Mr R C Love, OBE, Mr J M Ozog, Mr I S Chittenden, Mr A J Hook, Mr B H Lewis, Mr M E Whybrow and Mr H Rayner

ALSO PRESENT: Mr P M Hill, OBE and Mr M Whiting

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs B Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport), Mrs S Holt-Castle (Interim Director of Environment, Planning and Enforcement), Mr S Jones (Director of highways, Transportation and Waste) and Miss G Little (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

172. Membership

(Item 2)

Members noted that Mr D Brazier had joined the Committee in place of Mr P Messenger.

173. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item 3)

Apologies were received from Mr T Bond, Ms S Hamilton attended as a substitute.

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

(Item 4)

There were no declarations of interest received.

175. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2019

(Item 5)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting on 19 March 2019 are a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

176. Verbal Update

(Item 6)

1. Mr Hill, OBE (Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services) announced that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) had its fifth annual PEEL (Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy) assessment. Mr Hill was pleased to announce that out of the three categories, Kent Police achieved one 'good' rating for its effectiveness and two

'outstanding' ratings for its efficiency and legitimacy. He said that Kent Police had officially been graded as the best Police force in the country and that the Prime Minister described Kent Police as an outstanding example of an excellent police force. Mr Hill commended the forces performance and had written to the Chief Constable on behalf of Kent County Council to congratulate Kent Police on their achievements.

2. Mr M Whiting (Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste) provided a verbal update on the following issues:

(a) Highways Pot-hole Blitz Programme

Phase 4 of the pothole blitz programme concluded in April 2019 and phase 5 had commenced with a further £5m allocated for patching and filling potholes throughout the summer period. Mr Whiting confirmed that weekly updates would continue to be sent to KCC Members, District and Council Leaders; and Kent MPs.

(b) Road Re-surfacing

The road resurfacing programme was well underway with a substantial increased volume of work due to additional KCC capital funding investment of around £20m.

(c) Pilot Transport Schemes

As a result of the Big Conversation, five pilot schemes had been produced to help the Council identify alternative ways to support rural bus services. The first of the five pilot transport schemes was due to be launched on 3rd June 2019. The other pilots were due to be rolled out over a six-week period and take place in; Dover, Maidstone, Sevenoaks, Tenterden and West Malling. Mr Whiting informed the Committee that the Member Working Group led by Mr H Rayner would review the overall performance of the pilots and identify areas where improved services could be implemented using existing budgets.

(d) Kent County Council Travel Saver and Kent County Council 16+ Travel Saver

Applications for the KCC Travel Saver and KCC 16+Travel Saver bus pass would be accepted from 3rd June 2019. Mr Whiting confirmed that eligibility rules would remain the same, however, applicants could now pay via instalments through direct debit to help improve the affordability of the pass for

parents. Mr Whiting said that the cost of the Travel Saver Pass had increased to £350, however, the cost of the 16+ Travel Saver pass remained at £400. For families on low income, the passes remained at £100 and Kent County Council continued to supply passes that were free-of-charge to those in care.

3. In response to queries regarding the benefits of purchasing a bus pass compared to the benefits of purchasing rail pass, Mr Whiting informed Members that the cost benefit would vary depending on a family's financial circumstances and therefore benefits would need to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Mr Whiting assured Members that the subsidised Travel Saver scheme offered families the opportunity to purchase a pass at half the cost of an annual season ticket.

177. Performance Dashboard

(Item 7)

Richard Fitzgerald (Business Intelligence Manager, Performance, Strategic Business Development & Intelligence) was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Fitzgerald introduced the Performance Dashboard which showed progress made against targets set for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) up to March 2019.
2. The officers responded to Members comments and questions as follows:
 - (a) In response to queries regarding WM02: Municipal waste diverted from landfill and converted to energy, Mr Jones (Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste) said that the Waste Partnership in Kent worked with district councils to help coordinate and segregate recyclable material from non-recyclable material. Whilst work was being done to improve recycling rates, this would have a negative impact on the conversion rates.
 - (b) With regards to the Digital Take-up indicators, Mr Jones informed the Committee that work was on-going to improve public facing IT interfaces to encourage increased usage of the online portals rather than via telecommunication methods. Mr Whiting (Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste) commended the success of the IT infrastructure and said that other interfaces needed to be designed in the same user-friendly fashion to encourage members of the public to access Kent County Council's services online. Mr Whiting paid further credit to those who had devised the workflow and said that the improved online access had generated a significant financial saving.
3. Members and officers thanked Mr Fitzgerald for his work and wished him well with his future endeavours.

4. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

178. Growth, Environment and Transport Performance KPIs 2019/20
(Item 8)

Richard Fitzgerald (Business Intelligence Manager, Performance, Strategic Business Development & Intelligence) was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Fitzgerald introduced the report that set out the proposed indicators that would be reported within the Growth, Environment and Transport Dashboard for 2019/20. Mr Fitzgerald said that an extensive amount of work had been carried out to review the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and associated targets.
2. Officers responded to comments and questions and follows:
 - (a) With regards to the Digital Take-up indicators, Mr Jones informed the Committee that work was on-going to improve public facing IT interfaces to encourage increased usage of the online portals rather than via telecommunication methods. Subject to the approval of Mr Whiting (Cabinet Member for Planning, highways, Transport and Waste) there would also be further campaigns to help promote digital take-up and encourage the public to report faults and/or concerns online. Some of the improvements included enhanced map imagery to make it easier for those reporting potholes etc. to pinpoint the exact location and an improved drop-down list. Mr Jones said that the aspiration of the digital interface was to ensure that all service reporting could be accomplished within five clicks of entering the portal. Mrs Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport) paid tribute to Mr Jones and his team who had process mapped all the reporting systems to ensure a LEAN approach which in turn would reduce the customer call-time and letters and increase customer satisfaction rates.
 - (b) Mr Jones informed the Committee that KPIs HT01 and HT02 were comparatively lower than the previous years targets due to the exceptional winter conditions experienced which had allowed the highways team to carry out more pothole repairs than initially anticipated. Mr Jones informed Members that weather conditions were likely to fluctuate and therefore the target levels for 2019/20 were still aspirational having taken into account the variable weather conditions. With regards to the reduction of municipal waste converted to energy, the target for 2019/20 was an aspirational target as Kent County Council were working with the district and borough councils to improve recycling rates. Mr Jones highlighted to Members that Kent County Councils waste to landfill target had remained as the lowest in the country and work would continue to minimise that target year-on-year.
 - (c) In response to Members queries regarding KPI WM01 and WM02, Mr Whiting agreed to liaise with Mr Jones outside of the meeting to review the proposed target levels.

- (d) Mrs Cooper agreed to bring a report a future Committee that explained how the district collection process impacted on the recycling targets. Mrs Cooper informed Members that the KPIs and Activity Indicators reflected a whole system approach, however, Members needed to remain mindful that not every district had the same recycling process or same ambition.
- (e) Mr Jones said that as a result of the increased budget, the Council was paying less per pothole, less per patch and repair rates were significantly quicker.

3. RESOLVED that the proposed indicators and associated targets be noted.

179. 19/00039 - Award of a short-term contract to the Commercial Services Group for the operation of three household waste recycling centres
(Item 9)

Simon Jones (Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste) was in attendance for this item.

- 1. Mr Jones introduced the report that sought approval from the Committee to implement a short-term variation for the operation and management of three Household Waste Recycling Centres to a Commercial Services Group as the incumbent supplier would cease to manage the three sites as of June 2019. The report set out how Kent County Council planned to continue the supply of its services and how it intended to align the operation and management of Household Waste Recycling Centres to the long-term commissioning strategy for all its waste services in future years.
- 2. Officers responded to Members comments and questions as follows:
 - (a) Mr Jones said that the co-terminus end dates of the contracts was intentional as this would help the directorate to align the commissioning period and as a result help Kent County Council secure substantial commissioning in the future, consolidate its procurement activity and review an ever-evolving market to ensure it entered into contracts with the right suppliers.
 - (b) In response to queries as to whether the contract would be awarded to a single supplier or to the Lot numbers, Mr Jones said that he was unable to provide a definitive answer, however assured Members that a procurement exercise would be undertaken to ensure that the contracted supplier offered the best value for money at that point in time.
 - (c) With regard to economies of scale, Mr Jones said that there were obvious economies such as staff coverage to ensure operational certainty over the various site locations, it presented potential opportunities for improved back-office functions and it also offered certainty in the haulage cost if there was one single source. There was also the opportunity to avoid duplication of costs that could arise when there were multiple suppliers. Mr Jones assured the Committee that in terms of economy, the proposed decision to have the same termination date for all Lots would invite

potential discussions around the development of a common commissioning plan for the whole county and attract a variety of potential suppliers. It would also offer consistency in terms of Key Performance Indicators and provide Kent County Council with the opportunity to obtain a consistent approach with the districts and improve working relationships.

(d) Mrs Cooper (Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport) informed Members that a full commissioning strategy for all Lots would be proposed for the consideration of the Committee in the autumn of 2019.

(e) Mr Jones confirmed that Pepper Hill was subject to a separate long-term contract, however, work would be done in the future to review how the Pepper Hill site would form part of the commissioning strategy.

3. RESOLVED that the proposed decision (19/00039) to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste to:

- a) award a short-term variation of the contract for the operation and management of three Household Waste Recycling Centres at Tovil, Maidstone & Swanley, to Commercial Services Group (CSG) from June 2019 until November 2020; and
- b) note that Officers will prepare a common commissioning plan for the whole County. The detail of the various options within this commissioning plan, will be discussed at a future meeting of the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee,

be endorsed.

180. 19/00040 - South West Kent Dry Recyclables Processing Contract - SC18061
(Item 10)

Simon Jones (Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste) and David Beaver (Head of Waste Management Services) was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Jones introduced the report that set out the proposal to enter into a contract for the processing of dry recycling materials collected at the kerbside by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council (TMBC). As a result of changes to the mix of co-mingled dry recyclable materials which were to be collected at the kerbside by Boroughs from September 2019, Kent County Council needed to source an alternative supplier who could process the waste at a Material Recycling Facility (MRF).
2. Officers responded to Members comments and questions as follows:
 - (a) Mr Jones said that the final decision paperwork would include the updated version of the Kent Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

- (b) In response to queries regarding the four-year duration of the contract and whether this was an efficient length of time to obtain maximum value, Mr Jones said the four-year period was the maximum term permitted through the proposed buying framework and was based on two factors; the availability and capacity of the Material Recycling Facilities (MRF's). The four-year duration also offered KCC greater flexibility in terms of aligning itself to the commodity rates and ensured a shared risk of price variances with the provider during the life of the contract.
 - (c) Mr Jones said that the current MRF was located in Crayford, however, discussions had taken place with various stakeholders to identify potential sites for a further MRF and assured the Committee that they would be informed should there be any further updates.
 - (d) Mr Beaver informed Members that in 2018 the Committee approved the South West Kent Partnership model (*Decision 18/00023 - Inter-Authority Agreement in respect of the management of the Waste Project between Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (TMBC) and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC)*) which commissioned a new kerbside model of waste collection to significantly increase recycling and composting rates. However, due to the revised borough collection specification which separated paper and card from glass, cans and plastic, the original contracted MRF in Crayford could no longer process the new recycling mix and therefore a new MRF needed to be identified.
 - (e) In terms of the income generated through recycling, Mr Beaver said that the only materials that produced an income for KCC were paper, cardboard, textiles and batteries.
 - (f) Mr Beaver referred again to the decision paper that was approved in 2018 and said that the South West Kent Waste Partnership agreed a system of performance payments whereby the savings generated through diverting residual waste from Allington would be shared between the two district councils and Kent County Council. Mr Beaver said that the new proposed commissioning solution would offer savings of £1m a year and had already been activated in Gravesham Borough Council which had achieved a minimum level of 20% recycling and received increased payments from KCC. The scheme was due to be rolled out in East Kent in 2021 and throughout Mid-Kent in 2023.
3. RESOLVED that the proposed decision (19/00040) to be taken by The Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste to award contractual arrangements for the disposal and processing of recycled materials collected by these two Waste Collection Authorities up to a 4-year contract period, be endorsed.

181. 20mph - Policy Review

(Item 11)

Simon Jones (Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste) Nikola Floodgate (Schemes Planning and Delivery Manager) and Steve Horton (Casualty Reduction Manager) were in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Whiting (Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transportation and Waste) introduced the report that set out the review of the County Council's approach to 20mph speed limits to ensure they met the requirements of the latest guidance. Mr Whiting highlighted to Members that there were over 1,000 roads within Kent that were subject to 20mph zones or limits and that in the past 24 months, there had been 22 schemes implemented that covered 286 roads. Mr Whiting said that the report explored the benefits of modifying the criteria required to implement a 20mph speed limit through greater flexibility, and in particular, the measures that could be taken in locations where prevailing road speeds were between 24mph and 28mph.
2. Mr Jones informed the Committee that a review of the research published by the Department for Transport (DfT) was carried out as well as a review of the policy which compared Kent County Councils approach to 20mph with other local authorities, the results of which confirmed that Kent's policy was aligned to national policy. However, Kent County Council was keen to review and consider the use of more innovative and less intrusive traffic calming measures, which was reflected throughout the report.
3. As a supplement to this, Ms Floodgate said that whilst the current approach remained compliant and consistent with national standards, there was merit in exploring the benefits of modifying the criteria required to implement a 20mph speed limit by providing greater flexibility. The proposed scheme would also help to deliver a more cost-effective approach and would be aligned to the active travel and public health agenda with a shared aim of reducing accidents on Kent's roads. The pilot schemes would be located in locations where there were prevailing road speeds between 24mph and 28mph and results of the trials would be reported back to the Committee within 12 months of their implementation. The success of the scheme would be measured by speeds before and after, the number of collisions and the perception of safety by local residents.
4. Officers responded to Members comments and questions as follows:
 - (a) Mr Whiting said that funding had been allocated to carry out a review and develop an evidence base to support the future use of an expanded list of traffic calming measures. This evidence would include best practice in other parts of the country and how this may be applied to Kent's schemes.
 - (b) Ms Floodgate confirmed that the allocated budget for the review was £75,000 and this was from the 2019-20 Local Transport Plan budget

- (c) With regard to community support, this would be instigated and undertaken by Town/Parish Council/Residents' Groups. Mr Whiting provided Members with an example of community support from within his own constituency and said that residents had carried out a survey which received full support for a 20mph speed limit zone. This was then presented to Mr Whiting with the confidence to address the Parish Council and offer combined funding to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to support the implementation of the request. Ms Floodgate added that common support trials had already been carried out and work was being done with Faversham Town Council and the 20's Plenty Group to review scenarios where a blanket 20mph approach was going to be adopted and instead, a compromise was found to adopt an approach that was most effective for that area in question.
- (d) Ms Floodgate said that whilst the DfT enabled Kent County Council to use a blanket approach and enforce 20mph speed limits, a more risk adverse approach through innovative calming measures to identify the right speed for the right environment helped to reduce casualty numbers. In Many cases Kent County Council had gone against the recommendations of the Police and taken into account other factors that supported the need for a 20mph speed limit. Mrs Floodgate also confirmed that the Policy did not support the suggestion that 20mph limits were not permitted on A and B roads but that they were not normally suitable.
- (e) Mr Whiting informed the Committee that there was a separate policy and fund for road safety interventions. If the 20mph scheme was the solution to a proven safety issue, there would be a separate budget to address that and would be implemented as part of a Road Safety Improvement Plan.
- (f) Mr Jones addressed Members queries regarding Margate Town Centre and said that the scheme allowed District/ Parish Council's to request intermittent traffic calming measures where there were seasonal changes and this would ensure that variable speed limits were applied at the appropriate times of year and times of the day to help balance tourist need with business need.
- (g) Ms Floodgate said that whilst the report states that a further report to the Committee would be presented 12 months after the implementation of the scheme, the aim was to have all schemes in place within a 12-month period and then to provide feedback to the Committee as soon as practically possible.
- (h) In response to the effects of lowering speed limits, Mr Horton said that following a road traffic collision, life care would usually cost around £4m. In terms of the speed severity, Government statistics identified that when a person is hit at 30mph there was a 7% fatality rate, when hit at 35mph

there was a 14% fatality rate and when hit at 40mph there was a 33% fatality rate.

- (i) Mr Jones said that air quality was a significant factor, however, due care needed to be taken to ensure that by implementing lower speeds within one area, this did not have a negative impact in other areas as vehicles would then increase their speeds. Air quality needed to be resolved, not re-located to other areas.
5. RESOLVED that the proposed modifications to the current approach to reflect current learning and best practice; and the proposed series of research pilots that would need to be undertaken to determine the effectiveness of alternative (innovative) traffic calming measures at locations where the prevailing road speeds were between 24mph and 28mph, be noted.

182. Kent & Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy - Draft for Public Consultation

(Item 16)

Carolyn McKenzie (Head of Sustainable Business and Communities) was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Payne introduced the report that set out the final draft of the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy for public consultation. Mr Payne commended the officers for their work and paid tribute to the Members of the Cross-Party Working Group for their contribution in helping to draft the final strategy and the proposals that were set out within the report.
2. Mrs McKenzie reminded Members that the Energy and Low Emissions Strategy was a joint strategy with Medway and was created as a sibling document to the Kent Environment Strategy. The report proposed that a public consultation would run for 12 weeks from 11 June 2019 to 2 September 2019. Following the consultation, comments would then be evaluated, and a final Draft Strategy would be presented to the Committee in November 2019 together with a draft Implementation Plan and Evidence Base.
3. Officers responded to Members comments and questions as follows:
 - (a) Mrs McKenzie confirmed that Kent County Council was working closely with the private sector and academic bodies to look at air quality. A briefing note was available to Members and Mrs McKenzie agreed to re-circulate this.
 - (b) Mrs McKenzie thanked Members for their comments and recommendations and assured the Committee that wherever possible the team always strived to exceed targets.

4. RESOLVED that the content of the Final Draft Strategy and any further avenues of engagement that should be undertaken during the public consultation phase, be noted.

183. Kent's Plan Bee - (Kent County Council Pollinator Action Plan)

(Item 13)

Stephanie Holt-Castle (Interim Director of Environment, Planning and Enforcement) was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Whiting (Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste) introduced the report that provided an overview of the Kent County Council Pollinator Action Plan – “Kent’s Plan Bee” and commended Mr Holden for leading the cross-party working group.
2. Mr Holden informed the Committee that in May 2018, a motion was presented before Full Council calling for the establishment of a cross-party working group to produce a Pollinator Action Plan. The motion was unanimously carried and over the last 12 months, the working group, supported by Allison Campbell-Smith (Programme Manager, Kent Ambassador, Kent Vision Live and KEIBA) and Elizabeth Milne (Natural Environment and Coast Manager), had drafted the action plan and sought the Committee’s approval for the Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste to agree the draft Pollinator Action Plan prior to final endorsement at County Council.
3. The officer responded to Members comments and questions as follows:
 - (a) Mrs Holt-Castle informed the Committee that Ms Milne had engaged with a number of services to ensure a cross-authority action plan, this included: Highways, Public Rights of Way, Infrastructure, Country Parks, Countryside Management Partnerships, as well as external organisations which included Kent Wildlife Trust, Natural England and the Bumblebee Conservation Trust.
 - (b) Mrs Holt-Castle said that whilst specific elements of the action plan could not be undertaken yet due to contractual commitments, there was an opportunity for other elements to be taken forward by undergraduate or recently graduated trainees as part of a project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.
 - (c) Mrs Holt-Castle reminded Members that the “Kent’s Plan Bee” was an action plan, not a strategy or a policy and therefore after its endorsement at County Council, it would be delivered with immediate effect.
4. RESOLVED that the draft Pollinator Action Plan be approved prior to final endorsement at County Council.

184. Work Programme

(Item 14)

1. RESOLVED that the Work Programme be noted, subject to the inclusion of the following items:
 - (a) A report that explained the District Council collection process and how this had an impact on recycling targets.
 - (b) The Pitch Allocation Policy for Gypsy and Traveller Service Charge (July 2019)
 - (c) Final Draft Energy and Low Emissions Strategy following public consultation (November 2019)
 - (d) An interim report on the 20mph Policy (May 2020)