

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.

- (a) **FIELD**
- (b) **FIELD_TITLE**