

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT CABINET COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee held online on Thursday, 12 November 2020.

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

ALSO PRESENT: Miss S J Carey, Mr M D Payne and Mr M Whiting

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr P Bhatti (Kent Resource Partnership Manager), Mrs B Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport), Mrs S Holt-Castle (Interim Director of Environment, Planning and Enforcement), Hymers, Mr D Joyner (Transport & Development Manager), Ms R Kennard (Chief Analyst, Strategic Commissioning Analytics), Mr R Kidd (Project Manager (Area Lead – Infrastructure)), Mrs E Milne (Flood Risk & Natural Environment Manager), Mr T Read (Head of Highway Transport), Mr D Smith (Director of Economic Development), Mrs S Thompson (Head of Planning Applications) and Miss E West (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

296. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item 2)

Apologies from absence had been received by Mr Hook. Mr Bird attended as a substitute for Mr Hook. In addition, Mr Bowles sent his apologies from 11:00 to attend an appointment.

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

(Item 3)

Mr Collor declared an interest which related to item 10 on the agenda, as he was the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Licensing and Community at Dover District Council.

298. Minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2020

(Item 4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2020 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

299. Verbal Update by Cabinet Member(s) and Corporate Director

(Item 5)

- (1) Mr Payne (Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport) gave a verbal update on the following issues:

- a) Mr Payne reassured Members of the Committee that work continued at pace to deliver a facility at Sevington, Ashford, by Kent Highways on behalf of the Department of Transport for Her Majesty's government to provide a forward processing centre for HMRC and others for the transition which was due to start on 1st January 2021. He added that the surfacing work at the site had already begun and this included the truck-paved parking bays and also the swing lanes which had resumed after the recent period of wet weather. Whilst the continuation of work on the site was weather-dependent, Kent County Council had been assured that HGVs would be able to use the site from 1st January 2021 and that HMRC would also be on site from that date.
 - b) Mr Payne announced that the sweeps on one of Kent County Council's eight windmills had turned again under wind power for the first time since 1949, this was in the village of Chillenden and on 16th November 2020, the sweeps on the windmill in Cranbrook had been removed to enable a full evaluation of the required repairs.
 - c) Mr Payne sent his best wishes to the two officers within Kent Highways who had fallen ill as a result of Covid-19 and wished them both a speedy recovery. In addition, he thanked all of the Kent Highways staff who continued to work hard throughout the period of lockdown on behalf of all of the residents of Kent.
- (2) Miss Carey (Cabinet Member for Environment) gave a verbal update on the following issues:
- a) Miss Carey thanked Kent County Council's staff for continuing to provide vital services to residents throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and in particular the Waste Management team for their hard work and resilience in implementing a number of major contracts that were due to be renewed. Miss Carey specifically referred to the smooth handover of a large number of Kent's household waste and recycling centres to a new contractor.
 - b) Miss Carey announced that Kent County Council's Energy team had won an award for the Sustainable Energy Project of the year for the project that they had led for Northfleet School for Girls in solar installation and LED lighting upgrade. Kent County Council had now engaged with over 100 of Kent's schools in similar projects.
 - c) Miss Carey said the District Heating item had been deferred as the Energy team had only won a major grant from the Government for the scheme and BEIS wished to take the lead in announcing the details of this.
- (3) Both Mr Payne and Miss Carey gave their best wishes to Mrs Cooper upon the announcement of her retirement plans for 2021. They both thanked her for her tireless work and dedication to the service over many years.
- (4) Mrs Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport) gave a verbal update on the following issues:

- a) Mrs Cooper referred to the Brexit transition period on 1st January 2021 and said that Kent County Council continued to work closely with partners in districts, the Department for Transport, HMRC and Highways England on the granular detail of the plans. She said that a further all-Member briefing would take place on 1st December 2020 at 10:30am which would provide further information to Members in relation to the plans. She added that whilst Kent County Council were planning for the transition itself and potential spells of bad weather, there was also much work being undertaken with health colleagues in relation to Covid-19 and a possible vaccine roll-out.
- (5) In response to a question, Mrs Cooper referred to a letter from Unite about their lack of involvement in discussions about facilities at the Sevington lorry park or other truck stops. She said that whilst Unite had not been involved in the discussions the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) had taken up the issues which related to the facilities on site at Sevington and Manston in particular to ensure that full medical and welfare facilities were available on both sites. The KRF had been fully supported by the Department of Health and Social Care in the provision of those facilities.
- (6) In response to a question, Mr Payne referred to the potential of a new site at Dover and said that such a site would be part of Kent's 200-day plan and not part of the 1st January transition plan.
- (7) In response to a question, Mr Payne referred to Kent's School Street Scheme and the early trial of the scheme in St Peters footway area, he said that the possibility for the support for something such as the 20mph scheme would be fully evaluated in due course.
- (8) In response to a question, Mrs Cooper referred to the ongoing discussions between Kent, the Department for Transport and Highways England to ensure that Dover would be kept clear during transition as a live project which was supported by the local MP.
- (9) In response to a question, Mrs Cooper referred to the Traffic Assessment Projects (TAP) A256 and A20 and said that these were the filters that lorries moved forward to and were then released down into the port of Dover. She said that because the lorries were released very quickly, there would be no toilet facilities. She added that discussions with borough councils in relation to parking, cleansing and litter issues continued to take place.
- (10) The Chairman reiterated the comments which had been made by the Cabinet Members in relation to Mrs Cooper's retirement. Members of the Committee supported this.
- (11) RESOLVED that the verbal updates be noted.

300. Performance Dashboard

(Item 6)

Ms R Kennard (Chief Analyst) and Mr D Beaver (Head of Commercial Management and Waste Services, Highways Transportation and Waste) were in attendance for this item

- (1) Ms Kennard introduced the Performance Dashboard which set out the progress against targets set for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), with the latest Dashboard including data up to September 2020. 14 of the 18 KPIs achieved target and were RAG rated green, one KPI was below target but did achieve the floor standard and were therefore RAG rated amber, and three KPIs did not achieve floor standard and were therefore RAG rated red.
- (2) Mr Payne (Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport) referred to KPI '*HT12: Streetlights, illuminated signs and bollards repaired in 28 calendar days*' within the Performance Dashboard and said that the figure for the month of September 2020 was 81% and did not yet appear within the Performance Dashboard. He added that none of the lights had stopped working, it was merely a communication issue.

Officers then responded to a number of comments and questions from Committee Members, which included the following: -

- a) In response to questions on the wide variation in performance across Kent for recycling and other Miss Carey (Cabinet Member for Environment) said those districts with the lowest rates of recycling and highest weight of waste per household were also those that still collected waste weekly. She said that new legislation was expected that would require councils to collect food waste separately which would provide an opportunity to look again at how recycling might be improved. KCC was continuing to work with all the district/borough councils to reduce waste and increase recycling. She referred to the effect the Covid-19 pandemic had had on the amount of waste that households in Kent had produced in recent months and emphasised the importance of partnership working between Kent County Council and district/borough councils to educate and encourage the appropriate disposal of waste.
- b) Mr Beaver agreed with Miss Carey's remarks. He also explained that the reduction in composted waste in WM01 and WM03 was thought to be the result of the prolonged hot and dry weather in July and August which had less to less garden waste. This also had the effect of reducing disposal costs. He added that overall, there would be a significant increase in the levels of kerbside-collected waste as more people were spending time at home as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- c) Mr Payne referred to KPI '*HT08: Emergency incidents attended to within 2 hours*' and said that highways incidents were ranked according to the date/time in which they were received, and the severity of the incident. He reassured Members of the Committee that they could contact him with regards to specific incidents within their own divisions.
- d) Mrs Cooper confirmed the formal definition of 'Emergency incidents' as current and real danger incidents such as diesel on the road, tree branches across the road, missing gully covers, large potholes etc.

- e) Miss Carey assured the Committee that carbon reduction target was on track even without the help from a reduction in some emissions during lockdown.
- f) Mr Beaver said the recent closure of the Allington Waste Management Facility was not reflected in the figures in this report as it was for the second quarter (July – September inclusive). This would closure would impact the landfill figures for Q3. Miss Carey undertook that the commentary in the next Performance Dashboard report would cover the situation with Allington.
- g) Mr Payne said that Kent's Pothole Blitz strategy had significantly improved the condition of Kent's roads.

(3) RESOLVED that the performance dashboard be noted.

301. Kent Resource Partnership (Presentation)

(Item 7)

Mr P Bhatti (Kent Resource Partnership Manager) was in attendance for this item

- (1) Mr Bhatti presented a series of slides to the Committee which set out information which related to the Kent Resource Partnership and its structure.
- (2) Mr Bhatti confirmed that the Kent Resource Partnership Annual Report 2019/20 would be available in the coming weeks and could be circulated to Members of the Committee.

Mr Bhatti then responded to a number of comments and questions from Committee Members, which included the following: -

- a) Mr Bhatti emphasised the importance of referring to waste as a 'resource' as opposed to 'rubbish' and said that KRP actively encouraged residents and councils to adopt and replicate the term.
- b) Mr Bhatti referred to the points set out within the 'What's Next?' slide of his PowerPoint presentation and said that in relation to government's Resources and Waste Strategy, one of the key policies was extended producer responsibilities which placed the focus back on the producer to make change which was better for the environment, or face an increased production cost. From a KRP perspective, and with government consulting on key policies over the next 6 months, the KRP would influence and engage with local authorities across the country and others across the industry to ensure that the core packaging materials that were being used were easily recyclable.
- c) Mr Bhatti briefly referred to the KRP's commitment to the charity WRAP (Waste & Resource Action Programme) who worked closely with government to deliver practical solutions to improve resource efficiency.
- d) Mr Bhatti emphasised the importance of the KRP working closely with all of Kent's local authorities, businesses, and communities to be more efficient and to better understand the production of waste.

(3) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

302. Design in Kent's Built Environment

(Item 8)

Mr M Whiting (Cabinet Member for Economic Development) and Mr R Kidd (Project Manager (Area Lead – Infrastructure)) were in attendance for this item

- (1) Mr Whiting, Mr Payne (Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport) and Miss Carey (Cabinet Member for Environment) thanked Mr Smith and Mr Kidd and their colleagues in the work that they had carried out in ensuring sustainable design principles for Kent and Medway.
- (2) Mr Kidd introduced the report which set out activity to raise the quality of design in Kent's built environment. The report also addressed how the activity responded to the government's proposed planning reforms in relation to design. He then presented and navigated through the Kent Design Guide website and explained each detail of the website to the Committee.

Mr Kidd then responded to a number of comments and questions from Committee Members, which included the following: -

- a) Mr Kidd explained some of the significant challenges faced in relation to developers and the volume and quality of new-build houses. He said that in light of those challenges, it remained the responsibility of local planning authorities to hold developers to account in relation to the design of those houses. He said that the government's white paper on planning reform would positively affect design and construction during all stages and said that very robust responses to government on planning matters would continue.
- b) Mr Kidd referred to the design guide's timescales and said that whilst there was still a significant amount of technical detail to explore, he was confident that the programme would be met.
- c) Mr Kidd confirmed that more information in relation to the local case studies referred to within the report would be presented in due course.
- d) Mr Kidd confirmed that he would seek further clarification outside of the meeting in relation to downloadable content on the Kent Design Guide website.

(3) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

303. Kent's Plan Bee

(Item 9)

Ms E Milne (Natural Environment & Coast Manager) was in attendance for this item

- (1) Miss Carey (Cabinet Member for Environment), the Chairman and Ms Milne introduced the report which informed Members of the Committee on how Kent

County Council was acting to reverse the decline of pollinators by delivering Kent's Plan Bee.

Officers then responded to a number of comments and questions from Committee Members, which included the following: -

- a) Ms Milne described how Rosie Earwaker, Bee Roads Officer for the Kent Wildlife Trust, had worked with the Infrastructure, Highways and the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) teams on implementing best practice in managing landscape proactively for pollinators.
- b) Ms Milne reported that Kent's Plan Bee online summit was the most highly subscribed event run by KCC this year. Those registered to attend were from a broad range of sectors and included staff from across KCC itself.

(2) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

304. Dover Fastrack Update

(Item 10)

Mr S Hymers (Fastrack Development Manager) was in attendance for this item

- (1) Mr Payne (Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport) and Mr Hymers introduced the report which provided information which related to the Dover Fastrack service.
- (2) In response to a question, Mr Hymers said that plans were in place for the Kent Thameside Fastrack service to be electric from 2022. He added that whilst the starting point for emission standards in Dover was Euro 6 Diesel, Kent Thameside Fastrack was a self-sustaining model and monies generated and reinvested in the service would enable progression in better fleet and infrastructure for the service.
- (3) In response to a question, Mr Hymers said that whilst the fleet had not yet been specified, Kent Highways continued to work efficiently with the monies available. He said that Kent Highways had worked closely with Transport for London in relation to their ultra-low emissions zone measures and sharing best practice.
- (4) Mr Payne talked about the modelling work that continued to be undertaken and the possibility of funding streams moving forward or working in consultation with other partners involved as they would benefit from the scheme.
- (5) A Member of the Committee asked that it be recorded in the minutes that some residents had raised concerns in relation to emissions and had been advised that only new ultra clean buses would be specified.
- (6) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

305. 20/00104 - Kent Transport Model Support & Development Commission

(Item 11)

Mr D Joyner (Transport & Development Manager (West Kent)) and Mr T Read (Head of Transportation) was in attendance for this item

- (1) Mr Payne (Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport) and Mr Joyner introduced the report which set out an overview of the key aspects of the Kent Transport Model and the Support & Development Commission and recommends the granting of delegated powers to award a contract, subject to the outcome of a procurement process.
- (2) Mr Payne and the Chairman emphasised that the proposal was not a proposal for Kent County Council to spend £15m, it sought to find an appropriate provider to deliver £15m of work that would be bought by individuals such as developers etc. The proposal was not part of the end of transition, it was a standalone proposal for the next ten years.
- (3) Mr Payne reminded Members of the Committee that they had already been given the opportunity to discuss the details of the Kent Transport Model Support & Development Commission proposal and the associated costs outside of the meeting, prior to the Cabinet Committee meeting taking place.

Officers then responded to a number of comments and questions from Committee Members, which included the following: -

- a) Mr Joyner said that the determination of the availability and cost of data was a decision for the County Council. It would depend on who had commissioned the work and how it would be used. He gave examples in terms of supporting the Local Plan process and said that whilst there would be a cost involved for local groups with regards to obtaining data, it was not intended that this would be prohibitively costly.
- b) Mr Joyner said in terms of innovation, many transport modelling consultants were involved across different counties and countries. The commission would allow for future development including towards near real-time modelling to monitor traffic and travel, feed data into the model and implement solutions. Near real-time modelling had just started being introduced in York. It was intended that Kent would be able to take advantage of such technology.
- c) Mr Joyner said cycling journeys were not specifically included within the model, but the intention was to use other data, including cycling, alongside information from the model.
- d) Mr Payne emphasised the importance of adopting new technology early as a Council to put Kent in the forefront of thinking and to ease traffic and congestion issues in Kent.

- e) In terms of public access to information, Mr Read said it would be set out in the fees and charges report which was reported annually to each of the Cabinet Committees. He said Members could be updated on and be able to comment on contracts and the award process.
 - f) Mrs Cooper commended the report and said that it would provide a single model of the truth for different agencies to access.
 - g) Mr Read reiterated the points made by Mr Joyner in relation to charging and said that the charge for information and what was charged for the use of the model was entirely a decision for the County Council, not the consultant.
- (4) The Cabinet Committee endorses the proposed decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport to grant the Director of Highways, Transport & Waste delegated powers to award a contract to maintain and develop the Kent Transport Model and to run a scenario testing service on behalf of the County Council, subject to the outcome of a procurement process. The Cabinet Committee also recommends to the Cabinet Member that a further report be brought back to the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee covering issues relating to availability of the data and the pricing.

306. Consultation on Draft Statement of Community Involvement: Minerals and Waste Planning Policy and Planning Applications - Minerals and Waste and County Council Development

(Item 12)

Mrs S Thompson (Head of Planning Applications Group) was in attendance for this item

- (1) Miss Carey (Cabinet Member for Environment) drew Members' attention to a minor error within the report's recommendation, which should have read:
- 'The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to note and comment on the draft updated Statement of Community Involvement (as set out in Appendix 1) for public consultation, prior to approval by the Cabinet Member for Environment.'***
- (2) Miss Carey and Mrs Thompson introduced the report which set out information relating to the consultation on the draft Statement of Community Involvement: Minerals and Waste Planning Policy and Planning Applications - Minerals and Waste and County Council Development (SCI).
- (3) In response to a question which related to section 1.5 of the report, Mrs Thompson referred to the fourth bullet point and said that the intention of one of the key changes proposed to the current published SCI was to reflect that neighbour notification would become a discretionary part of the Council's planning application process. This reflected the practice of many planning authorities. She advised that awareness of planning applications would be supplemented with other engagement methods, for example additional notices and posters.

(4) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

307. Work Programme

(Item 13)

RESOLVED that the Work Programme for 2020/21 be noted, subject to the inclusion of the following items: -

- Heritage Strategy
- District Heating Scheme
- Cameras/sensors along with a broader overview on the Live Labs project