

From: Susan Carey, Cabinet Member for Environment
Simon Jones, Corporate Director, Growth, Environment & Transport
To: Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee – 18 January 2022
Subject: **Decisions taken between Cabinet Committee Meetings**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of Paper: Cabinet Member Decision

Future Pathway of Paper: N/A

Electoral Division: County-wide

Summary: The attached decision was taken between meetings of the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee as it could not be reasonably deferred to the next programmed meeting of the Cabinet Committee for the reasons set out in paragraph 2.5 below.

Recommendation:

The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to note that decision 21/00109, Kings Hill Solar Park was taken between meetings of the Cabinet Committee in accordance with the process set out in the Council's constitution.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Cabinet Member for Environment has taken decision 21/00109 to:

- The deployment of grant funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (decision 21/00034) for the procurement and management of works for the construction of the Kings Hill Solar Park;
- Approve the policy determining appropriate use of the electricity produced by the solar park, in line with the requirement to reduce KCC's carbon emissions;
- Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport to take relevant actions, including, but not limited to, entering into contract and other legal agreements as required to arrange and deliver the ongoing management of the solar park once operational; and
- Delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, and the Cabinet Member for Environment, to enter into all necessary legal agreements for the delivery and the construction of the project, including purchase of the site.

1.2 The decision was taken between meetings of the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee, as it could not reasonably be deferred due to the reasons set out in paragraph 2.5 below.

2. Background to decision

- 2.1 Kent County Council has been awarded via a Section 31 agreement time limited grant funding from Salix towards the delivery of low carbon energy projects including two solar parks (see decision 21/00034). The grant funding from Salix must be spent by the 31 March 2022, with any remaining funds needing to be passed back.
- 2.2 This decision sees the delivery of a c2.98MW solar park in Kings Hill near to the Kent Scientific Services building.
- 2.3 The scheme is seeking to offset over 633 tonnes of carbon a year from KCC's energy requirement and will contribute significantly to the de-carbonisation of KCC energy supplies and in meeting its carbon neutrality 2030 target.
- 2.4 The funding was initially allocated to the North Farm waste site which KCC own however over a year's worth of environmental improvements were required on the site before the solar park project could start. Instead of losing the funds, officers have sought to develop the Kings Hill site instead which is owned by the Liberty KCC joint venture.
- 2.5 Due to the complexity of the project and associated risks in several areas including rapidly changing market conditions, officers in liaison with the Cabinet Member needed time to develop a comprehensive risk mitigation plan which delayed confirmation that the project could be delivered. Following this confirmation, the decision needed to be rapidly implemented so that work could start on site from January and the time limited grant funding from BEIS secured.

3. Recommendation(s)

The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to note that decision 21/00109 Kings Hill Solar Farm was taken between meetings of the Cabinet Committee in accordance with the process set out in the Council's constitution.

4. Background Documents

- Record of Decision: [21/00109](#)
- Record of Decision: [21/00034](#)

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