

By: Alex King – Deputy Leader
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To: Cabinet – 19 April 2010

Subject: Decisions from Cabinet Scrutiny Committee – 9 April 2010

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report sets out the decisions from the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee and invites a response from Cabinet.

Introduction

1. The Leader has agreed the decisions from Cabinet Scrutiny Committee will be reported to the following meeting of the Cabinet for a response. The responses will be reported back to the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee.
2. The decisions from the meeting of the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee on 9 April 2010 are set out in the Appendix to this paper.

Recommendation

3. That Cabinet agree responses to these decisions, which will be reported back to the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee.

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Background Information: *Nil*

Cabinet Scrutiny Committee – 9 April 2010

Title	Purpose of Consideration	Guests	Decisions	Cabinet Member Response
Weather Damaged Roads	Members noted from the Cabinet report that it is hoped, as far as possible, that the tendering process for the road surface repair contracts would be won competitively by local small and medium-sized contractors. Members had queries about this process, how it will be administered, the cost of this administration and the inspection arrangements for work undertaken. Members also had concerns with regard to the standard of work to repair the roads prior to this winter.	Mr P Carter Mr M Austerberry Mr J Burr Mr K Hills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thank Mr Carter, Mr Austerberry, Mr Burr and Mr Hills for attending the meeting and answering Members' questions; 2. Support in principle the process of inviting local companies to submit tenders for the road surface repair contracts; 3. Ask for confirmation of the level of backlog to road repairs, the level of government support, and the level of expenditure which would be required to clear the backlog; 4. Ask for written confirmation that the total cost of administering the process and overheads is no more than 10% of the total cost of the contract; 5. Ask that Members, Parish Councils and Town Councils be informed when teams will be working in their areas; 6. Ask that the frequency of inspection of utilities work to road surfaces is increased to ensure benefits and high performance of utility companies; 7. Thank the witnesses for their assurance that there would be 	

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			<p>systematic monitoring of the work and ask the Scrutiny Board to review the Weather Damage Repairs to Roads in Kent contract and the work to date after £1million has been spent.</p>	
Kent Digital Service	<p>Members asked for clarification on the following points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.the urgency of the decision 2.cost 3.governance 4.advertising revenues 	<p>Mr R Gough Mrs T Oliver</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thank Mr Gough and Mrs Oliver for attending the meeting and answering Members' questions; 2. Ask that a note be provided once the staff consultation period has finished, explaining the process in terms of what was undertaken, why it was undertaken in that way and the cost of the process; 3. Ask that a copy of the legal advice regarding the need to use TUPE be provided. 	<p>The Cabinet Member for Corporate Support Services and Performance Management has agreed that this information will be supplied to all Members of the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee</p>
Safeguarding Children	<p>Members had concerns about the information flow on Serious Case Reviews to Members of the County Council</p>	<p>Mrs S Hohler Mrs K Weiss</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thank Mrs Hohler, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education and Mrs K Weiss for their attendance at the meeting and for answering Members' questions; 2. Thank the Cabinet Member Children Families and Education for her offer that when the summary of a serious case review is published and available to the public it is made available to all Group Leaders and Mr Lees and ask that this be extended to all Members; 	

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			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Ask that the Cabinet Member Children, Families and Education in conjunction with the Deputy Leader (who has the portfolio for the Overview and Scrutiny Function) look again at the interrelationship with the Vulnerable Children’s Policy Overview Scrutiny Committee, the Children’s Champions Board, the Safeguarding Board and report the outcome to the Scrutiny Board; 4. Ask that the Scrutiny Board receive a report addressing how and whom should have the responsibility for elected Members as “Corporate Parents” supporting the needs of Looked After Children; 5. That the Cabinet Member for Children Families and Education in conjunction with the Managing Director be asked to prepare a briefing note setting out for Members the information and resources made available to schools and governors to ensure that the risks and vulnerability of children, as occurred in the recent case in Tunbridge Wells, is avoided. 6. Ask the Cabinet Member for Children Families and Education to draw up a protocol for dealing with future Serious Case Reviews in as far as it 	

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			<p>affects Information to Members, Members' input into the recommendations flowing from the review and the monitoring of the recommendations. It was suggested that the Vulnerable Children's Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be the appropriate body to consider such a protocol in the first instance.</p>	
<p>Local Member Information</p>			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Throughout the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee's discussion on each of the items was a common theme about how local Members are kept informed of issues, initiatives and decisions affecting their electoral divisions; 2. The Committee are aware of a range of important initiatives being undertaken which will improve the quality and flow of information to elected Members for example implementation of the Informal Member Group: Member Information (approved by the County Council – December 2008), the enhancement and refresh of the County Council website and the decision to develop Kent Digital Service. However there is a lack of cohesiveness in pulling all these factors together and a lack of clarity over who has the overall vision which 	

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			<p>the Committee recommends must be addressed. The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Localism and Partnerships be asked to report to the Scrutiny Board on how and when he proposed this work to be taken forward, and this be reported to Members of Cabinet Scrutiny Committee through their follow up items report.</p>	