

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

MINUTES of a meeting of the Cabinet held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Monday, 12 July 2010.

PRESENT: Mr P B Carter (Chairman), Mr N J D Chard, Mr G K Gibbens, Mr R W Gough, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mrs S V Hohler, Mr A J King, MBE, Mr K G Lynes, Mr R A Marsh and Mr J D Simmonds

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms K Kerswell (Group Managing Director), Mr M Austerberry (Executive Director, Environment, Highways and Waste), Mr D Cockburn (Executive Director, Strategy, Economic Development & ICT), Ms A Honey (Managing Director Communities), Ms L McMullan (Director of Finance), Mr O Mills (Managing Director - Adult Social Services), Ms R Turner (Managing Director Children, Families and Education) and Ms M Peachey (Kent Director Of Public Health)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

Before the commencement of business Mr Carter welcomed Katherine Kerswell, to her first meeting of Cabinet since taking up her post of Group Managing Director. Mr Carter also placed on record his thanks and that of the Cabinet to David Cockburn for the work he had undertaken whilst acting as the Council's interim Chief Executive

1. Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 June 2010 *(Item 2)*

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2010 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

2. Revenue & Capital Budget Monitoring Exception Report *(Item 3 – Report by Mr John Simmonds, Cabinet Member for Finance; and Lynda McMullan, Director of Finance)*

(1) This was the first exception report for 2010-11 and reflected the County Council's response to the recent in year revenue Government grant reductions. The report identified a number of significant pressures that would need to be managed during the year if there was to be a balanced revenue position by year end, and also detailed the Council's response to the in year capital grant reductions.

(2) Mr Simmonds highlighted some of the key areas which would need to be closely monitored and said the Council was in the process of assessing the impact on specific areas of the budget in the light of the in year grant reductions announced by the government. Lynda McMullan said pressures in the budget were not unusual at this time of the year but agreed with Mr Simmonds that some areas, such as the KASS budget would need to be closely monitored

(3) Mr Chard spoke about the need to reduce the Integrated Transport programme, the details of which were set out in appendix 1 of the Cabinet report. Schemes that had a strong safety element, were started, that had substantial external funding and that made a large contribution to reducing congestion would remain but others would need to be taken out of the programme and slipped to later years. The proposed reductions had already been the subject of consultation and Mr Chard said he fully appreciated the views which had already been expressed by member and Cabinet colleagues regarding individual schemes.

(4) Mr Carter said the Council was already making good and intelligent in roads in making the required in-year reductions but bigger challenges still lay ahead. He also spoke about the cuts to the Building Schools for the Future Programme and it was agreed a report on the consequences of this for Kent would be made to the next meeting.

(5) **Cabinet:**

(i) noted the initial forecast revenue and capital budget monitoring position for 2010-11.

(ii) noted the Council's response to the in year revenue grant reductions and the consequent changes to revenue cash limits as detailed in section 2 of the Cabinet report.

(iii) noted the response to the in year capital grant reductions and the consequent changes to capital cash limits as detailed in section 4 of the Cabinet report.

(iv) agreed that those Integrated Transport schemes as proposed in Appendix 1 to the Cabinet report be deferred for reconsideration next year once the national funding position was clearer.

(v) agreed that £4.249m of re-phasing on the capital programme be moved from 2010-11 capital cash limits to 2011-12 and future years: and,

(vi) a report on the consequences for Kent of the cuts to the Building Schools for the Future Programme be submitted to the next meeting.

3. Children and Young People of Kent Survey 2009 (NFER)

(Item 4 – Report by Mrs Sarah Hohler, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education; and Rosalind Turner, Managing Director for Children, Families and Education) (Joanna Wainwright, Director, Commissioning and Partnerships and Anthony Mort Policy Manager, Customer Care were present for this item. Also present were Rachel McCabe and Billy Harrison both students at Valley Park Community School, Maidstone)

(1) This report informed Cabinet of the key findings from the 2009/10 Children and Young People of Kent Survey and discussed the implications across the County Council as it informs the development of the next 3 year Children and Young People

Plan. Mrs Hohler said this was a very informative report which would help the Council to set its priorities and inform future planning of services.

(2) Rachel McCabe and Billy Harrison both spoke of the importance of undertaking such a survey as it helped to highlight those areas of interest and importance to young people when it come to developing future services. They both highlighted in particular what they saw as the need to further develop mentoring schemes in schools and Joanna Wainwright said the County Council recognised this was an important area for young people and was therefore already encouraging schools to develop these schemes very much in line with what Rachel and Billy had said.

(3) During the course of discussion Cabinet members spoke of the importance of this survey and the work which was already being undertaken by the County Council in relation to services for young people. In answer to questions raised by Cabinet members Rachel and Billy spoke of the importance for issues such as smoking, drugs and alcohol to be discussed in schools but warned of the danger of adopting a 'preaching' approach as that would most likely turn young people off from listening to the importance of the underlying message. They also said that within their school they felt they were in a safe and secure environment. In conclusion they said that there was a need for young people to be listened to more and given a voice which would be heard when it came to developing future strategies and the setting of priorities which were relevant to them.

(4) At the conclusion of the discussion Mr Carter placed on record his thanks and that of the Cabinet to Rachel and Billy for attending the meeting and for expressing their views with such clarity. He said he wanted to see what more the Council could do around these issues and to take this work forward by working with the Kent Youth County Council.

(5) **Resolved** that the contents of the Cabinet report and the Children and Young People of Kent report 2009/10 be endorsed.

Mr Alex King was in the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

4. KCC Strategy for the Employment of Socially Excluded Adults (PSA 16)
(Item 5 – Report by Mr Graham Gibbens, Cabinet Member, Adult Social Services; and Mr Oliver Mills, Managing Director, Kent Adult Social Services)(Margaret Howard, Director of Commissioning, West Kent was present for this item)

(1) Mr Gibbens said this was a cross-directorate strategy designed to enable a co-ordinated KCC response to tackling unemployment within 4 groups of disadvantaged adults at greatest risk of social exclusion – these being care leavers, adults with moderate to severe learning disabilities, adults in contact with secondary mental health services, and offenders under supervision. He spoke of the work which was being undertaken by the officer led Employability Group and the valuable support which had been given to its work by Mr Lynes and Mr Gough through their portfolios. He also said the Council's approach to helping these groups was now very much reflected in the way the government was developing national policy in helping people become more independent.

(2) During the course of discussion Cabinet members spoke in support of this work and its importance in helping people live more independent lives. It was also said that helping young offenders into employment would help reduce levels of re-offending.

(3) **Resolved:**

(i) that the development of the KCC Strategy for the Employment of Socially Excluded Adults be endorsed,

(ii) approval be given to the ongoing support for the adoption of the strategy;

(iii) it be noted that the Employability Group would be developing an Action Plan which it would share with the Corporate Management Team, and,

(iv) endorsement be given to the continuation of the work being undertaken by Employability Group.

5. A Hidden Harm Strategy for Kent

(Item 6 – Report by Mr Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community Services and Amanda Honey, Managing Director Communities)

(1) Mr Hill said the Hidden Harm Strategy focused on delivering improvements in outcomes for children and young people who were affected by their parent or carers drug and alcohol misuse. The Strategy had been developed by the multi agency Hidden Harm Working Group and had been subject to extensive consultation. The Strategy would have a positive impact on outcomes for children and families through coordinated interagency partnerships and joined up front line delivery as required by the National Drugs Strategy and Think Family approach. Mrs Hohler said this was a large and significant piece of work which would play an important part in improving outcomes for young people.

(2) **Resolved** that the Kent Hidden Harm Strategy be approved

6. "Towards a Smokefree Generation" Kent Tobacco Control Strategy 2010-2014

(Item 7 – Report by Mr Alan Marsh, Cabinet Member for Public Health; Meradin Peachey, Kent Director of Public Health; and Mr Allan Gregory, Tobacco Control Manager)

(1) Mr Marsh said this Strategy would enable the County Council and its partners to acknowledge the importance of supporting a comprehensive approach to tobacco control; for their own organisation and the communities that they serve, by incorporating tobacco control measures into their strategic plans and commissioning intentions. Mr Marsh also spoke about the cost to the health economy of smoking associated diseases which in Kent was estimated at some £22m. Mrs Hohler spoke of the risks of smoking and the need to continue to campaign hard and engage with young people as much as possible as to the effects of smoking.

(2) **Resolved** that the “Towards a Smoke free Generation” Kent Tobacco Control Strategy 2010-2014 be endorsed

7. Operation Find and Fix - Weather Damage Repairs to Roads

(Item 8 – Report by Mr Nick Chard, Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste; Mr Mike Austerberry- Executive Director Environment, Highways and Waste; and Mr John Burr, Director- Kent Highway Services)

(1) This report provided Cabinet with an update on Operation Find and Fix- and the progress being made with delivering repairs to roads, both with externally tendered contractors and the County’s Maintenance Contractor.

(2) Mr Chard said following the severe winter Operation Find and Fix had seen the County Council undertake an unprecedented amount of work to repair weather damaged roads. There remained at this time a focus on repairing A and B class roads based on safety defects found by inspectors and reported to the public and this would continue but additional gangs were now embarking on repairs to unclassified roads. Therefore although there was still more to do, progress had been good and Kent remained in the vanguard with the quality of work being completed to a high standard. Mr Burr said the Council was now about a third of the way through this programme so there was still some way to go. An overall assessment of the remaining work suggested that a further £3.1m would be needed in addition to the £3.4m which had already been committed. Of this Kent Highway Services had been able to find some £1.5m through efficiencies leaving the need for an additional £1.5m

(3) Resolved:

(i) the progress to date be noted and the allocation of an additional £1.5m to this Programme be agreed; and,

(ii) the approach to repairs on And B class roads as set out in the Cabinet report be endorsed

8. Decisions from Cabinet Scrutiny Committee - 23 June 2010 (To follow)

(Item 9 – report by Mr Alex King , Deputy Leader and Mr Peter Sass, Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership)

(As this report was not available at the time of the despatch of the main agenda, the Chairman declared its consideration at this meeting to be urgent on the grounds that it contained information and feed back from the meeting of the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee held on 23 June 2010 which members needed to consider at this meeting of Cabinet.)

(1) This report set out the decisions from the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee held on 23 June 2010. In relation to the item on the Future of Older Person’s Provision, Mr Gibbens said although a presentation was made to the Adult Social Services POC at its meeting on 25 June arrangements had been made for a further member briefing to be given on the afternoon of Tuesday 26 July. There was also an open offer to give a briefing to any member who wished to discuss the proposals either with him as the Cabinet Member and/or with officers within the KASS Directorate.

(2) Resolved that the report and the responses of Cabinet members to the issues discussed at the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee meeting on 26 June 2010 be endorsed.