

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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### COMMUNITIES POLICY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Communities Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 16 September 2010.

PRESENT: Mrs E M Tweed (Chairman), Mr A R Chell (Vice-Chairman), Mr I S Chittenden, Mr H J Craske, Mr D A Hirst, Mrs J P Law, Mr J M Ozog, Mr K Smith, Mr R Tolputt, Mr M A Wickham and Mr A T Willicombe

ALSO PRESENT: Mr P M Hill, OBE and Mr A Sandhu, MBE

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr S Beaumont (County Manager, Community Safety), Mr A Bose (Public Involvement & Communications Manager), Mr D Crilley (Director of Community Cultural Services), Ms J Edwards (Director of Policy and Resources, Communities Directorate), Ms D Fitch (Assistant Democratic Services Manager (Policy Overview)), Mr R Fitzgerald (Performance Monitoring Manager), Mrs S Garton (Head of County Performance and Evaluation Manager), Mr W Gough (Staff Officer To The Managing Director), Ms A Honey (Managing Director Communities), Mr M Scrivener (Business Information Manager), Ms A Slaven (Director Youth Services and KDAAT), Mr K Tilson (Head of Finance for Policy and Resources) and Mr D Whittle (Policy Manager)

#### UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

##### **68. Minutes**

*(Item A3)*

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2010 are correctly recorded and that they be signed as a correct record.

##### **69. Feedback from the Informal Members Group to assist with development of the budget**

*(Item A4)*

(1) The Chairman read a statement from the Cabinet Member for Finance which explained that, although the Cabinet was committed to involving all Members of the County Council in the budget process, they had reached the conclusion that at the particular juncture, any further debate of the details before the Government's announcement of the spending review on 20 October 2010 would not be time well spent. In October there would be a clearer idea of the size and timing of the challenge, which would still leave time for a meaningful debate about next years budget in advance of the draft budget being published in January 2011.

(2) RESOLVED that the statement by the Cabinet Member for Finance be noted.

## **70. Portfolio Holder and Managing Director's Update**

*(Item B1)*

(1) Mr Hill and Ms Honey updated Members on the following issues:-

*28 July 2010 - Top 200 Visit to Margate*

(2) Ms Honey reminded Members of the work that had been carried out in two wards in Margate as part of the Total Place pilot. She explained that Kent had been selected as one of three areas in the County to have a visit from the top 200 civil servants across all departments. This had been organised as part of an initiative commissioned by the Cabinet Secretary, to work on the issues around disadvantage in neighbourhoods and to come up with ideas around the Big Society which would feed into the Comprehensive Spending Review. This gave an opportunity to share KCC's concerns and put forward suggestions including the establishment of an intervention area for the two wards and to share thoughts on housing. The report from the top 200 would be circulated to the Committee when it was available. Members agreed that they would like more information on the work that was being carried out in Thanet and how the resources that were being put into that area were being utilised.

*14 September 2010 - Review of Prisons in Kent and its impact on Public Services*

(3) Ms Slaven referred to the document that had been produced in the summer which looked at the impact having a relatively large number of prisons had on Kent. Better partnership working would lead to better outcomes for prisoners who lived in Kent and also those who were not residents of Kent. On 14 September 2010 a group including the Chief Probation Officer, representatives from Health, Housing, the Department of Work and Pensions, Youth Offending Service and Drug Services had met to discuss how they could work together to improve outcomes especially for the Thanet area. This was a first step and the outcomes would be developed by Mr Bainbridge and the Community Safety Partnership.

*Euro-Camp*

(4) Ms Honey referred to the Euro-Camp which had been organised by the Kent Youth Service. This included a whole week of activities and had been based at Swattenden. She thanked the Youth Service for organising and it was hoped that there would be a second event on a bigger scale in 2012.

*YOS ISS Arts Council Awards*

(5) Ms Honey congratulated the eight young people from the Youth Offending Services who were awarded bronze arts Council award after attending a Summer Arts College. These eight young people were at high risk of re-offending but all of them had got college places for the autumn. In response to a question Ms Slaven explained that this was the first time that these awards had been held, it had been experimental and had been achieved over a short period of time. All those involved were congratulated on an excellent project.

### *Open Golf 2011*

(6) Mr Hill reported that arrangements were well advanced for the Open Golf at Sandwich in 2011. The spin off for Kent was estimated to be £70 m of inward investment.

### *Planning for the 2012 Olympic Games*

(7) Mr Hill reported that planning for the 2012 Olympic Games was going very well. Plans were underway for the next Kent school games in 2012. Kent had more training camps than any other English County and there were even more anticipated. He referred to other parallel events such as the four nations under 17 athletic international, Kent Power World Cycling Tournament. No decision had yet be made in relation to the where the Olympic torch would enter the UK, this was expected in the next few months.

### *Turner Practical completion*

(8) The date of practical completion for Turner Contemporary was 8 December 2010. There would be a soft opening in April/May 2011 with a formal opening later in the year.

### *Kent Drug and Alcohol Action Team (KDAAT) Performance*

(9) Mr Hill stated that four and a half years ago the performance of the KDAAT was not where it should be, since then it has been transformed. In the past year there had been a 7% increase in the number of people into effective treatment. KDAAT was one of the best in its family of services.

### *Update on Capital Schemes*

(10) Mr Hill updated the Committee on the Ashford Gateway, Gravesend Library, the Beaney refurbishment and Kent History and Library Centre. He was proud of Community Services Capital projects which had been delivered on time.

### *The Launch of Communities Resilience Scheme*

(11) Mr Hill explained that the Communities Resilience Scheme had come from an idea by Mr Cloake, the Head of Emergency Planning to enable communities to help themselves in emergency situation, such as the snow last winter. This had been piloted on a couple of areas and had been well received.

### *Ofsted Inspection of Adult Education*

(12) In June 2010 Community Learning and Skills (CL&S) had been subject to an Ofsted inspection. They had been rated as "Good" and included in the comments was reference to the staff being confident in their roles, partnership working being effective and success rates being high. There were a couple of areas which needed to be addressed and an action plan was in place to do this.

### *Trading Standards legal cases*

(13) Ms Honey undertook to arrange for the information on Trading Standards legal cases to be circulated to Members of the Committee.

### *Kent Venture Boat – New Petra – Oostende*

(14) Mr Sandhu updated the Committee on his visit on 7 July 2010 to the Petra Barge in Oostende. When he visited there were 10 young people on board including 5 young people from a Special Needs School in Dover. They were all enjoying the facility and explained that it built their confidence and self esteem.

(15) RESOLVED that the update be noted and that that a progress report be submitted to the November meeting of the POSC on the work being carried out in the two “total place” pilot wards in Thanet.

## **71. Financial Monitoring 2010/11**

### *(Item B2)*

(1) Mr Tilson presented a report to the Committee on the forecast outturn against budget for the Communities portfolio.

(2) In response to a question from Mr Chittenden regarding the deemed “overspend” on the Supporting People budget, Mr Tilson explained that the supporting people budget in previous years had not been fully spent and a reserve had been created to set aside funds for future expenditure programmes. The current year’s expenditure is in excess of the current year’s Area Based Grant (ABG) allocation but was fully funded by drawing down from this reserve. Mr Tilson confirmed that the current “overspend” was a planned programme of expenditure which was agreed by the Commissioning Body. This represented the forecast drawdown for the entire year, rather than an opportunistic drawdown to balance the books in relation to spend to date.

(3) Mr Tilson explained that the supporting people budget came from a specific grant which had been rolled forward into a reserve; there was a planned programme of expenditure.

(4) In relation to the Edenbridge Centre, Mr Crilley stated that as the anticipated land values had not been met it had been necessary to bring in as many organisations as possible to work within the centre and to fund the project costs. This had been difficult to achieve but they had successfully got the community on board to make this happen and he confirmed that the costs would be fully covered by partner contributions, as well as other units from within KCC that had not been part of the initial specification and plans.

(5) Regarding the work of the Gateways Members were informed that regular reports were submitted to the Corporate Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee and copies of these reports were available on request.

(6) Mention was made of the variance in expenditure in the Community Safety budget that included a narrative relating to the Future Jobs Fund. Mr Tilson and Mr Hill explained that a number of deputy wardens had been employed by the unit, which had given the opportunity to bring into the job market disadvantaged people and give them experience of work but that this had been fully funded by an application to the Future Jobs Fund and therefore at no cost to the authority. This Fund was established following a successful bid by the Supporting Independence Programme (SIP), who monitored applications and reported gross expenditure and income within their budget. SIP had a net budget of £700k from KCC but the appendix to the monitoring report showed a gross expenditure in excess of £4m. This referred to allocations made to units who employed Future Jobs Fund applicants, with income also in excess of £4m which was the drawdown of funding received from Government. The benefits of giving people short-term employment, in these placements which lasted 6 months and were fully funded, was critical in these challenging times.

(7) RESOLVED that the projected outturn figures for the directorate for 2010/11 based on the first quarterly monitoring report to Cabinet be noted.

## **72. Kent Apprenticeships**

*(Item B3)*

(1) Mr Gough introduced a report which updated the Committee on the latest position regarding the development of the apprenticeship offer in Kent.

(2) Mr Gough explained that the South East Apprenticeship Company (SEAC) were a training agency who employed young people and enabled them to be shared amongst a number of employers, thus making it easier for employers to be involved in support apprentices. The SEAC was one of approximately 14 companies set up by the previous Government across the Country. He stated that he could not see any barriers to a private company or a social enterprise full filling a similar role.

(3) In response to a question, Mr Hill confirmed that the Learning and Skills Board had within its remit apprenticeships. The Board consisted of Cabinet Members and senior representatives from the Directorates which had an input into learning and skills. These included Children, Families and Education, Adult Social Services, Regeneration and Economic Development and Communities. He stated that a report from the Board would come to the County Council in due course.

(4) Regarding a question on the limiting factors in recruiting apprentices, Mr Gough explained that this was the availability of employers willing to take on apprentices as Kent had a lot of small businesses. The team had produced a pack to support employers and to make it as easy as possible for them to take on apprentices. Also it was difficult for young people to see apprenticeships as an option at the same time as they were applying for places at college or sixth form, as it was not possible to apply for an apprenticeship until they had a job and they could not get a job until they were 16, by which time they had often decided on another option.

(5) RESOLVED that the latest developments on the Kent Apprenticeship Programme be noted and that Members of the Committee inform officers if they require any further

information to enable them to become Ambassadors or Champions for Apprenticeships.

### **73. Developing a new Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) 2011-2014**

*(Item B4)*

(1) Ms Slaven presented a report which set out the development of the next Kent Children and Young Peoples Plan (CYPP) 2011-2014. It was anticipated that the statutory duty to produce the CYPP would soon be abolished and although the Kent Children's Trust was no longer a statutory body there had been agreement for the partners to continue to work together. The CYPP would provide a strong direction to ensure that the partners continue to improve outcomes for Kent's Children, Young People and their families. The emerging financial and locality frameworks would require a redraft of the current Plan to ensure that it reflected the new environment and context for delivering services. A final draft of the Plan would be submitted to this Committee in November and to the Cabinet in January 2010.

(2) In response to a question, Ms Slaven confirmed that Youth Action Groups were represented on Local Children's Trust Boards and this was set out in the terms of reference for the Boards. In relation to young carers, Ms Slaven acknowledged that they fell within all seven of the priority groups outlined in the draft plan and their high level of priority had been noted. It was pointed out that Members, through their local grants, could support young carers projects.

(3) The issue of the number of meetings that partners on the Local Children Trust Boards attended was raised and it was questioned whether this was best use of their time. However, the new structures would need time to bed in to before assessing how effective they were.

(4) RESOLVED that the current position on the development of the new CYPP 2011-2014 be noted.

### **74. Community Safety - Presentation**

*(Item B5)*

(1) Mr Beaumont gave a presentation on the new context for Community Safety and Criminal Justice. It included information on Home Office decisions already made, what had been achieved in Kent over the last decade, options for strategic vision and tactical vision and current consultations.

(2) In response to a question on public confidence and perception of criminal activity, Mr Beaumont stated that, in his opinion, the way to improve this was to listen to people, react quickly and to be visible to build confidence. It was important to have neighbourhood based policy with news letters to keep people informed about policing in their area.

(3) Members questioned how they could influence what was happening around Community Safety and Criminal Justice as a lot of it appeared to be outside of their remit. Also mentioned was the importance of insuring that consultation was meaningful, and it should be recognised that magistrates already consider rehabilitation rather than a short sentence where possible.

(4) In relation to increasing the powers of Police Community Support Officer's (PCSOs) Mr Hill confirmed that the Chief Constable kept these under constant review.

(5) RESOLVED that the presentation be noted.

## **75. Communities Directorate Consultation, Involvement and Complaints report 2009/10**

*(Item B6)*

(1) Ms Edwards introduced a report which updated Members on the activities that took place across the Directorate (2009/10) to engage and listen to the views of all those who were interested in or involved with their services. It also included the Directorate's annual complaints monitoring report.

(2) RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted and the following priorities as set out below be endorsed:-

(a) Exploring how digital technologies could be better deployed to make engagement work, cheaper, quicker, more responsive, more relevant and more convenient for residents and businesses.

(b) Use every opportunity to keep down the costs of consultation exercises, minimise duplication and to make best use of the analysis and information that is collected.

## **76. Draft Towards 2010 annual report**

*(Item B7)*

(1) Mr Hill presented a report which set out the process for finalising the fourth and final *Towards 2010* Annual Report prior to approval by County Council on 14 October and attached a draft of the report (concerning the 17 targets led by the Communities Directorate) for Members' comment.

(2) RESOLVED that the reports attached at Appendix one be noted.

## **77. Bold Steps for Kent - Update**

*(Item B8)*

(1) Mr Whittle presented an update on the timetable and development of the new medium term plan, *Bold Steps for Kent*, and sought the Committee's input on the key issues over the next four years that it believes the plan might address ahead of the launch of a draft version for public and partner consultation.

(2) Members stressed the importance of ensuring that Bold Steps for Kent was clearly understood by all its target audiences, including the public and officers. It should be a document that was able to engage the public and get them to be optimistic about the future for Kent and their part in it.

(3) In response to a question on the “right to bid” process for KCC services, Mr Whittle confirmed that this included bidding against external competition and also staff buy outs.

(4) Mr Hill stated that he had suggested that the document should include a section on “Enjoying Life for the people of Kent”.

(5) Mr Whittle invited Member to submit any further suggestions that they may have to him outside of the meeting.

(6) RESOLVED that the report and the comments made by Members including, ensuring that the document addresses its target audiences, including the people of Kent, and the suggestion that a section on “Enjoying Life for the people of Kent” be added be noted.

## **78. Draft Annual Performance report 2009 -10**

*(Item B9)*

(1) Mrs Garton introduced a report which provided an overview of the council's Annual Performance Report 2009/10 and attaches a draft of the report for Members' information.

(2) RESOLVED that the draft report be noted.

## **79. Core Monitoring Report**

*(Item B10)*

(1) Ms Garton introduced the relevant sections of the first Core Monitoring report which had been submitted to Cabinet on 13 September 2010, this would be a quarterly report to all Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committees. She invited comments on the presentation of the report.

(2) Ms Edwards confirmed that the directorate were happy that the Red/Amber/Green scores were an accurate reflection of the work of the directorate, currently there were no red issues but if there would they would be highlighted to the Committee. Mr Hill stated that he found the information in the report a very useful monitoring tool in his role as Cabinet Member.

(3) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

## **80. Informal Adult Learning: Lead Accountable Body role**

*(Item B11)*

It was noted that this item had been withdrawn as Lead Accountable Bodies were not going to be established.

## **81. Select Committees - update**

*(Item C1)*

(1) The Committee received a report which updated them on the progress of the Select Committee on Extended Services and also contained the minutes of the monitoring meeting of the Select Committee on Provision of Activities for Young People. Mr Chell, Chairman of the Select Committee, stated that the Committee had been pleased with the progress with their recommendations and highlighted a couple of outcomes including the establishment of a register of vehicles, owned by Social Services, Schools etc that could be used to transport young people to activities and the introduction of a positive image policy.

(2) Members were requested to advise the Democratic Services officer of any items that they would like to suggest for inclusion in the Select Committee topic review programme

(3) RESOLVED that the progress of the Select Committee on Extended Services, the minutes from the meeting of the Select Committee on Provision of Activities for Young People be noted.