

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

MINUTES of a meeting of the Cabinet held at Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Monday 18 June 2007.

PRESENT: Mr A J King (in the Chair), Mr N J D Chard, Mr K A Ferrin, Mr G K Gibbens, Mr R W Gough, Mr M Hill, Mr K G Lynes, Dr T R Robinson and Mr J D Simmonds.

OFFICERS: Mr P Gilroy, Chief Executive; Mr G Badman, Managing Director for Children, Families and Education; Ms A Honey, Managing Director, Communities; Mr O Mills, Managing Director for Adult Social Services; Ms L McMullan, Director of Finance; Meradin Peachey, Director of Public Health, and Mr P Raine, Managing Director for Regeneration and Environment.

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

Mr Pete Raine

Before the commencement of business, the Cabinet placed on record its appreciation and thanks to Pete Raine for his services to the County Council and the people of Kent.

1. Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 May 2007

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2007 were agreed as a true record.

2. Revenue and Capital Budget Outturn 2006-07; 2006-07 Re-phasing of Performance Reward Grant; 2006-07 Final Monitoring of Key Activity Indicators; 2006-07 Final Monitoring of Prudential Indicators, and Impact of 2006-07 Revenue Budget Outturn on Reserves.

(Item 2 - Report by Mr Nick Chard, Cabinet Member for Finance and Lynda McMullan, Director of Finance)

(1) The report detailed the provisional revenue and capital budget outturn for 2006 - 07 and detailed where revenue projects had been re-scheduled and/or were committed and where there was under or over spending. Also set out in Appendix 1 of the report were details of the re-phasing of projects funded from Performance Reward Grant. Appendix 2 of the report detailed the final monitoring of key activity indicators for 2006 - 07. The report also provided the year-end prudential indicators and detailed the impact on reserves.

(2) Mr Chard said that for the seventh consecutive year the Council had been able to demonstrate sound financial management by containing its revenue expenditure within the budgeted level and he placed on record his thanks to his fellow Members, and also to Officers, for the part they had played in that achievement. Mr Chard said that the budget for 2007-08 would be challenging and that budget planning had been made more difficult now that CSR '07 had been delayed until the Autumn. Mr Chard then said that the £7.740m underspend on the current budget would be transferred to the rolling budget reserve, pending a decision by Cabinet at its meeting in July as to its use. It was intended that, consistent with previous practice, Directorates would roll forward both their underspends and their overspends into 2007-08. Mr Chard also said that the 2007-08 Capital Programme would be revised to reflect the re-phasing and other variations of the 2006-07 Capital Programme. The details of the changes that would need to be made would be included in the first quarters' monitoring report of the 2007-08 budget to be reported to Cabinet at its meeting on 17 September 2007.

(3) During discussion Mr Gilroy said that KCC was leading on co-ordinating some work on behalf of other "floor" authorities likely to be most affected by CSR '07 and would be submitting a paper to the Local Government Association on this.

In addition it was likely that the Government grant regarding community safety budgets would be reduced, and that was likely to have significant implications as to the ability of local authorities to meet performance targets, and there was also likely implications for staff. This was a matter which the County Council would be taking up directly with the Government.

(4) Cabinet then agreed to:-

- (a) note the provisional outturn position for 2006 – 07;
- (b) the transfer of the 2006 - 07 revenue budget underspending to the rolling budget reserve, pending a decision by Cabinet at its meeting in July as to its use;
- (c) note the re-phasing of projects funded from Performance Reward Grant as summarised in Appendix 1 of the Cabinet report;
- (d) note the final monitoring of the key activity indicators for 2006 - 07 as detailed in Appendix 2 to the Cabinet report;
- (e) note the final monitoring of the prudential indicators for 2006 - 07 as detailed in Appendix 3 to the Cabinet report;
- (f) note the impact of the 2006 - 07 provisional revenue budget outturn on reserves as detailed in Section 3.5 of the Cabinet report; and
- (g) note that the 2007 - 08 Capital Programme would be adjusted to reflect the re-phasing and other variances of the 2006 - 07 Capital Programme.

3. Statement of Assurance and Internal Control 2006 - 07

(Item 3 - Report by Lynda McMullan, Director of Finance)

(1) The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 required that a Statement of Assurance and Internal Control, signed by the Chief Executive and the Leader (or his delegated representative) was included within the County Council's 2006 - 07 final accounts. The Statement confirmed that, during that year, effective corporate governance arrangements and internal controls were in place, both in terms of business and financial risks. The Statement also showed areas where controls needed to be strengthened and where action was being taken. The arrangements in place to ensure effective corporate governance and control functioned well during 2006-07. Where risks had been appropriately identified, controls had been or would be put in place during 2007-08.

(2) Cabinet noted that the responsibility for signing the Statement of Assurance and Internal Control had been delegated to the Deputy Leader in the absence of the Leader and endorsed the Statement for inclusion in the County Council's accounts for 2006 - 07.

4. Consideration of Draft KCC Annual Plan 2007-08 and Process for Publishing the Final Annual Plan

(Item 4 - Report by Mr Paul Carter, Leader of the Council and Mr Peter Gilroy, Chief Executive)

(1) Mr Gilroy said that the Annual Plan reflected the Business Plans and priorities of the County Council and acted as a bridge between the County Council's strategic objectives and corporate priorities and its service and financial plans. The Annual Plan was also a central part of the County Council's Performance Management Process bringing together performance information and comparing KCC with other authorities.

(2) During the course of discussion Mr Lynes said that he would have liked the Plan to have said more on how the County Council's vision and priorities meshed with that of its partners. Mr Gilroy said that the County Council was taking a leading role in developing and enhancing partnership arrangements and the Annual Plan referred to significant partnership developments such as the

Kent Commitment, and had a number of cross references to other strategic documents. He would however look at what more could be done to emphasise this partnership work.

(3) Following further discussion Cabinet:-

- (a) noted the arrangements for publishing the KCC Annual Plan 2007 - 08; and
- (b) endorsed the KCC Annual Plan 2007 - 08 for recommendation to the County Council on 21 June 2007.

5. Kent Waste Partnership - Joint Waste Management Committee Constitution

(Item 5 - Report by Mr Keith Ferrin, Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste and Mr Pete Raine, Managing Director of Environment and Regeneration)

(1) Kent Waste Partnership was the new name for the "umbrella" body replacing the Kent Waste Forum. It had been identified as an exemplar of excellent partnership working and was now moving to a further stage in its development. A key function of the Waste Management Committee would be to approve and implement Annual Action Plans to deliver the Kent Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy as agreed by the County Council in December 2006.

(2) During the course of discussion both Mr King and Mr Ferrin spoke about the importance which the County Council attached to developing, in collaboration with the Kent Districts, strategies aimed at achieving higher levels of recycling rates, coupled with cost effectiveness and value for money.

(3) Cabinet:-

- (a) agreed the adoption of the Constitution for the Kent Waste Partnership as detailed in Appendix 1 of the Cabinet report; and
- (b) agreed that KCC should continue as a partner with the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste remaining as the Council's representative on the Kent Waste Partnership.

6. Closure of Alderden House, Deal and Plans for Re-provision

(Item 6 - Report by Dr Tony Robinson, Cabinet Member for Children and Family Services and Liz Totman, Head of Specialist Children's Services)

(1) The report sought permission to take forward proposals as detailed in the Cabinet report for the closure of Alderden House, Deal and its re-provision through an expanded Enhanced Fostering Scheme.

(2) Dr Robinson said that there were currently four children aged between 9 - 11 resident at Alderden House and it had been estimated that this group of children would complete their planned programmes of care by around September/October 2007. It was anticipated that the children currently placed at Alderden House would, as part of their care plans, transfer to the care of long term foster carers. Any potential closure would not become operational until satisfactory transition plans had been completed for all children. All children would receive continuing support once they had left Alderden House. Dr Robinson said that there had been a formal consultation process which had lasted some ten weeks, this consultation had involved all interested parties, including children affected, staff, trade unions, political representatives etc., in line with Directorate procedures. Dr Robinson said that in all some eighteen letters of representation had been received and he gave a brief analysis of these. Dr Robinson also spoke about the transition plans for the children and said that these would be thought through very carefully and that the new

Enhanced Fostering Scheme would provide the necessary support to foster carers and schools where these children were likely to be placed. With regard to the staff at Alderden House, Dr Robinson said that it was expected that a number would be able to be redeployed, either as part of the support structure for the alternative scheme or through other KCC services. Proposals on redeployment and potential redundancy had been made clear to members of staff and the Personnel Department was currently exploring options including redeployment into the new service, alternative employment in Adult Social Services, schools and the respite service.

(4) Dr Robinson said that if Alderden House remained open only some seven children would benefit as opposed to some one hundred through the reinvestment of revenue savings into an enhanced fostering service. In addition the Enhanced Fostering Service would deliver significantly improved outcomes for children and earlier intervention would ensure that children who were showing signs of attachment disorder would receive the right care and support. Overall it was therefore difficult to justify the continuation of the service that could be delivered in other ways which was more effective both in terms of improving the outcomes for the children with attachment disorders and providing better value for money. Mr Badman said that the proposals would enhance provision for these young people and would be in their best interests.

(5) Cabinet then agreed to the closure of Alderden House, Deal, and its re-provision through an Enhanced Fostering Service as detailed in the Cabinet report.

7. KCC Public Health Smokefree Action

(Item 7 - Report by Mr Graham Gibbens, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Meradin Peachey, Director of Public Health)

(1) Mr Gibbens said that the report identified the requirements of the smoking legislation coming into force on 1 July 2007 and the action that KCC needed to take in order to implement the legislation. All KCC buildings would be smokefree and all possible encouragement would be given to staff to enable them to give up smoking should they choose to do so.

(2) Cabinet noted the implementation of the smokefree legislation consultation; and that the new legislation requirements had to be observed from 1 July 2007.

8. Cabinet Scrutiny and Policy Overview

(Item 8 - Report by Mr Peter Gilroy, Chief Executive)

The report provided a summary of the outcomes and progress on matters arising from the meeting of the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee held on 23 May 2007. The report also set out the work programme for Select Committee Topic Reviews as agreed by the Policy Overview Co-ordinating Committee and provided an update on the current status of each Topic Review.