

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES CABINET COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Communities Cabinet Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 26 April 2012.

PRESENT: Ms A Hohler (Chairman), Mr M J Angell, Mr R B Burgess, Mr C J Capon, Mrs P T Cole (Substitute for Mr H J Craske), Mr A D Crowther, Mr T Gates, Mr J A Kite, MBE, Mr M J Northey and Mr A Sandhu, MBE

ALSO PRESENT: Mr P M Hill, OBE

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms A Honey (Corporate Director, Customer and Communities), Mr N Baker (Head of Kent Youth Service), Mr D Crilley (Director of Customer Services), Ms A Slaven (Director of Service Improvement), Mr K Tilson (Finance Business Partner - Customer & Communities) and Ms D Fitch (Assistant Democratic Services Manager (Policy Overview))

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

3. Election of Vice Chairman

(Item A3)

Mr A Sandhu, MBE proposed and Mr M J Northey seconded that Mr H J Craske be elected Vice Chairman.

Carried

4. Chairman's Announcement

The Chairman welcomed Members to the first meeting of the Communities Cabinet Committee. She explained she saw the new Committee as having a particular focus on looking ahead, not backwards, and a strong emphasis on debate to inform future decisions, which would come at the top of the agendas. Information items would only be included on the agenda where they related directly to forthcoming decisions, and in the second half of meetings. She acknowledged that this was new ground for all Members and welcomed constructive suggestions about ways to improve meetings and on items to be included on future agendas. She would be doing her best to keep meetings as short as possible, with full debate on decisions a priority.

5. Minutes of the Meeting on 29 March 2012

(Item A5)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 29 March 2012 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

6. Dates of Future Meetings

(Item A6)

The Committee noted the dates of its meetings for 2012/13 as follows:-

Friday 6 July 2012

Wednesday 19 September 2012

Wednesday 14 November 2012

Thursday 17 January 2013

7. Portfolio Holder's and Corporate Director's Introduction to Customer and Communities

(Item A7)

(1) Mr Hill gave an introduction on how the Directorate had developed with particular reference to the additional services that had been incorporated in April 2011.

(2) Ms Honey introduced her Management Team and gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Directorate including the staffing structure and profile, the proposed revenue budget (including external funding sources) for 2012/13, and the major opportunities and challenges for the Directorate.

(3) Mr Hill mentioned that Mr Sandhu was standing down as one of his Deputy Cabinet Members and thanked him for the support that he had given and the work that he had carried out on his behalf. Mr Hill reminded the Committee that Mr Kite, his other Deputy Cabinet Member, was taking a special interest in Communication.

(4) Mr Hill set out his vision for the portfolio. He stated that Customer and Communities provided a first point of contact for the public accessing County Council services, and this was something that would be delivered differently in the next few years with a move towards greater use of the website. The budget would be a dominant feature and it was necessary to drive out efficiencies where possible to achieve the same results with less money. It was important to retain services but to look at changes to the way in which they were delivered. There would be a move toward more commissioning of services assisted by the localism agenda.

(5) Mr Hill reported that the Turner Contemporary had been open for a year on 16 April 2012 and half a million people had visited during this first year. He also referred to the opening of Kent History and Library Centre on 23 April 2012, which provided an excellent facility.

(6) Members asked a number of questions around the work of the Directorate which were answered by Mr Hill and officers.

8. Integrated Youth Services: Service Transformation

(Item B1)

(1) Mr Hill introduced the decision report and stated that the drivers for this were partly the need to make savings, but also to explore other ways of delivering services. There had been wide consultations with young people, colleagues in

Districts and other partners. Locality Boards, or other Member groups, had been asked for their agreement to the direction of travel at an early stage and following further discussions, each Locality Board or Group of Members had endorsed the plan for their area. He stated that it was intended to do more work at Locality Boards and that the localist approach had worked very well for the development of youth service proposals, although it had been resource-intensive.

(2) Mr Baker set out the process that had been followed to reach the stage of having a plan for each District which had been endorsed at the local level. He explained the detailed plans set out in Appendix A and gave examples of a number of changes to the original plans for areas such as Dover, Canterbury and Dartford which had been made following consultation. In relation to Ramsgate it had been agreed that as part of the commissioning process, providers would be sought to deliver youth services from the existing youth centre in Ramsgate in addition to the directly delivered service that was planned to take place from the existing Quarterdeck Youth Centre in Margate. This kind of adjustment was also taking place in other parts of the county following comments received through local consultation. Appendix A also included the amount of money allocated to each area from the commissioning budget. He explained that 80 – 85% of the key principles and outcomes for youth work would be the same for every area with Appendix A setting out the local priorities for each area. The timeline in the report set out how this would be achieved in advance of implementation on 1 January 2013.

(3) Mr Hill anticipated taking the decision on 2 May 2012 and there was an extensive communications plan in place to get the message out to the public and stakeholders. He asked for Members' assistance to reinforce the message in their areas that the intention was to produce a better youth service across Kent.

(4) Mr Hill, Ms Honey and Mr Baker answered questions and noted comments from Members which included the following:

- A Member commended the process of engagement with District Council colleagues and the work done to achieve agreement on the plan for the area.
- In relation to a question on how the Locality Boards would be involved in the commissioning process, Mr Baker explained that there would be ongoing engagement with Locality Boards regarding progress with commissioning in their area, which would allow them to assess the outcomes that were being achieved for the money allocated. There was also an internal process for monitoring outcomes from providers which may be reported to this Committee in future.
- Mr Baker pointed out that some Districts would continue to deliver services for young people in their area using local funds, but that this work would be designed to align with future provision designed through the Transformation model.
- Regarding timescales for commissioning, Mr Baker stated that there would be a conference on 10 May 2012 in Ashford for potential youth work providers. Following this there would be training sessions to help interested providers with the first stage of the commissioning process. Commissioning would be launched by the end of May, with the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) being open for at least four weeks. Members asked that the process should be

made as streamlined as possible to encourage small local organisations to be involved.

- Mr Baker confirmed that it was intended that one provider would take responsibility for the services to be provided from a specific building. They would be required to provide the youth work and work with the community to enhance the offer.

- Mr Baker explained that the timescale had been designed so that it would be possible for a current member of staff to continue to apply for a post under the new structure but would also have the opportunity to be part of the tender process by keeping their options open and submitting a PQQ in May. Appointments to posts would be made by July in most cases at which time a KCC employee who was successful in securing a post might decide to withdraw their PQQ. If they were not successful they could pursue the PQQ and commissioning route.

- Mr Hill confirmed that work was ongoing to obtain funding for youth services from various sources. Mr Baker stated that in theory it would be possible for organisations such as Parish Councils to come forward with funding for specific youth service provision in their area. If a large amount of funding became available for Youth Services generally, the resource allocation model would be applied so that each District would get their proportionate share.

- In relation to a question on youth service provision in Faversham, Mr Baker stated that an approach to local schools for joint funding for a Youth Tutor had not been successful. Youth provision was about delivering a 21st Century service and achieving positive outcomes. It was possible to have a range of ways of delivering services within an area including street based work.

- Regarding the involvement of young people in the commissioning process, Mr Baker explained that they would be involved in the specifications, in interviewing providers as appropriate and in assessing the work supplied by providers.

(5) Mr Hill thanked the Committee for their very positive contribution.

(6) RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member decision to confirm the detail of a local youth work offer in each District/Borough across Kent, combining a directly delivered service from Kent County Council with a range of other youth work provision using a newly-developed commissioning fund, be endorsed.