

REPORT TO: CABINET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 23 January 2008

BY: ASSISTANT TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CABINET SCRUTINY AND POLICY OVERVIEW
Standing Report to January 2008

Summary

1. The report summarises in Table 1 outcomes of the most recent Cabinet Scrutiny Committee (CSC) meeting held on 12 December 2007. Cabinet Members and Chief Officers were provided with a copy of the action sheet and asked to respond as appropriate. The report includes subsequent responses and actions by Cabinet Members and Senior Officers up to and including the meeting of Cabinet held on 14 January 2008.
2. Additionally, in Table 2 the report provides an updated statement on the current programme for Select Committee Topic Reviews. This programme was reviewed and agreed at Policy Overview Co-ordinating Committee on 5 November 2007.

Recommendations

3. Members are asked to note:
 - (i) progress on actions and outcomes from the meeting of Cabinet Scrutiny Committee held on 12 December as set out in Table 1;
 - (ii) the current position on Select Committee Topic Reviews.
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ACTIONS FOR CABINET/DIRECTORATES FROM CABINET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 12 December 2007

Item/Issue	Actions and Outcomes from Cabinet Scrutiny Committee
A2 Declarations of Interest	Item D1: Mr Hart declared he was a Member of Thanet Local Board; (non-prejudicial) Item D3: Mrs Dean declared she was the Local Member for the Division in which East Malling Research Station was located (non-prejudicial); also, Mrs Stockell declared that she was a Director of East Malling Research Station.
A3 Minutes of Cabinet Scrutiny Committee 24 October 2007	The notes were noted.
A4 Informal Member Group on Libraries and Archives' Unit Business Plan – 19 November 2007	(a) Subject to note 1 (18) © (i) being amended to read (need to develop a suitable Archives facility within the next 5 years”, the notes of the IMG Meeting were noted. (b) Members requested that briefing notes on both the Kent History Centre/Archives and the Museum of Kent Life issues be prepared and circulated to the Committee. (c) List of libraries for modernization to be circulated to all Members of the Committee. Actions for (b) and (c): Cath Anley/Stuart Ballard
A5 Informal Member Group on Budgetary issues – 19 November 2007.	(i) The notes were noted. (ii) The IMG's request for updated cost figures for the Turner project , including all associated works such as the Fort Hill de-dualling scheme, to be followed up. (iii) Mr Hart asked what the status of the land freed up by Fort Hill de-dualling would be. Actions: Andy Wood/Stuart Ballard
A6 Cabinet Scrutiny Committee: Standing Report to October 2007	(i) The report was noted. (ii) Mrs Dean asked to be advised of the status of the PSHE Group chaired by Mrs Hohler. Action: John Wale/Paul Wickenden
A7 Webcasting of Meetings	The Committee agreed that all future meetings should be webcast from January 2008.

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<p>C1: Draft Proposal for a Public Health Observatory for Kent</p>	<p>Mr G Gibbens (Cabinet Member for Public Health, and Mr M Lemon, Policy Manager, Directorate of Public Health, and Dr D O'Neill, Assistant Director for Public Health, West Kent Primary Care Trust, were present for this item and responded to Members' questions. The Committee concluded that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Mr Gibbens, Mr Lemon and Dr O'Neill be thanked for attending the meeting and answering Members' questions; (b) Cabinet's Decision to agree to the establishment of the Kent Observatory of Public Health be supported subject to:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) there being no additional cost to KCC arising from the setting up and operation of the Observatory; (ii) all the partners in the Observatory agreeing to share their data with each other free of charge; (iii) operation of the Observatory being regularly monitored by the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to ensure that the Observatory continues to deliver value for money for KCC. <p>Actions: Mr Gibbens, Meradin Peachey, Mark Lemon; Dr O'Neill;/Paul Wickenden.</p> <p>© The Director of Public Health be requested to ensure that her Annual Report each year includes details of the work of the Observatory. Action: Meradin Peachey</p>
<p>C2: Free Travel for 11-16 Year Olds</p>	<p>Mr R F Manning, Lead Member for Environment, Highways and Waste; Mr D Hall, County Transportation Manager, and Mr D Joyner, Sustainable Transport Manager (E and R) attended the meeting and answered Members' questions. After discussion the Committee resolved that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Mr Manning, Mr Hall and Mr Joyner be thanked for attending the meeting to answer Members' questions. (ii) All involved be congratulated on the successful launch and operation of the Freedom Pass pilot

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	<p>scheme.</p> <p>(iii) Cabinet be recommended that Freedom Passes should be provided immediately by the County Council, in its role as corporate parent, to all its Looked After Children in the pilot areas, with Looked After Children in other areas being provided with Freedom Passes by the County Council as the scheme is extended to those areas. Action: Mr Carter/Mr Ferrin/Mr Wells.</p> <p><i>Note: At Cabinet on 14 January 2008 Mr G Badman (Managing Director, CFE) reaffirmed that Foster Carers have allowances which are more than adequate to cover Home-School Transport and other activities. If the Looked After Child lives close to his/her school, the Foster parent may choose not to seek a Pass. On this basis Mr Badman stated there was no discrimination against Looked After Children in relation to the KCC Freedom Pass Scheme.</i></p> <p>(iv) The Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste be requested to announce as quickly as possible the areas to be covered by the extension to the existing Freedom Pass pilot schemes in June 2008, and by any subsequent extension before full County-wide roll-out is achieved. Action: Mr Ferrin/David Hall.</p> <p>(v) The intention to make a bid for Pathfinder status be welcomed, particularly if approval of such a bid would allow a reduced charge for the Freedom Pass to be made to disadvantaged householders. Action: Mr Ferrin/David Hall.</p> <p>(vi) Regardless of the outcome of the bid for Pathfinder status, the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste be urged to consider the possibility of offering a reduced charge, or payment by instalments, to disadvantaged households. Action: Mr Ferrin/David hall.</p> <p>(vii) The Cabinet Member for Environment,</p>

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	<p>Highways and Waste be requested to provide regular reports to the Committee to enable it to monitor the costs, charges and take-up of the Freedom Pass scheme. Action: Mr Ferrin/David Hall.</p> <p>(viii) The Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste be urged to pursue as strongly as possible the inclusion of rail travel in the Freedom Pass scheme (particularly in those areas where rail, rather than bus, provides the most important local public transport link), both directly and, in the context of the bid for Pathfinder status, by asking Government to put pressure on Southeastern Railway to participate. Action: Mr Ferrin/David Hall.</p> <p><i>Note: At Cabinet on 14 January 2008 Mr K Ferrin (Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste) stated that an approach had originally been made to South-East Trains to ask the company to consider participating in the Freedom Pass Scheme. No response had been received. Mr Ferrin believed that a further approach to SE Trains now would prejudice and delay KCC's current proposals for a countywide extension of the scheme. However, he did not rule out contacting the company again in the future.</i></p>
<p>C3: KCC International Activities Annual Report 2006/07</p> <p>C4: KCC Environment Policy</p>	<p>Following the request by the Dr Eddy, the Chairman, and by Mr Law and Mrs Dean, Spokespersons, additional information was provided on the costs and benefits of International Activities. Following this, the Committee decided that this matter should be referred to Environment and Regeneration Policy Overview Committee for consideration of whether the expenditure on Kent/Virginia and Smithsonian represented good value for money. Action: Mr King/Mr Pascoe/Adam Wilkinson; Tom Pelham/Christine Singh.</p> <p>Committee decided that this matter should be referred for consideration by the Climate Change Select Committee when it meets in January to monitor implementation of its recommendations.</p>

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	Action: Mr Ferrin/Carolyn McKenzie/Christine Singh
<p>C5: Other Cabinet Decisions D1: Second Homes Money 2005/06 (Decision 07/01074)</p> <p>D2: Borough Green and Platt Bypass (Decision 07/01078)</p> <p>D3: Future of the National Fruit Collections, Brogdale (Taken as an Urgent Item)</p>	<p>None.</p> <p>Following the request from the Chairman and Spokespersons, additional information has been obtained from Thanet DC on the background to this Decision. Mr Wale reported the detail of this to the Committee, following which the Committee noted the latest information, and concluded that no further action was needed.</p> <p>The Committee decided that this matter should be referred to the Environment and Regeneration Policy Overview Committee for that Committee to monitor implementation of the Decision.</p> <p>Action: Mr Carter/Mr Ferrin/Mr Pascoe/Adam Wilkinson; Geoff Harrison-Mee; Sharon Thompson; Abdus Choudhury; Christine Singh</p> <p><i>Mrs Stockell, having declared an interest as a Director of East Malling Research Station, left the room for the entire discussion.</i></p> <p>Mr R Gough, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Supporting Independence, and Mr S Gibbons, Head of Rural Regeneration (E and R) attended for this item and answered Members' questions.</p> <p>Mr A Hillier, owner of the Brogdale Site, and Dr Joan Morgan, representing the Friends of the National Fruit Collection at Brogdale, also gave evidence in support of the principle of keeping the National Fruit Collection at the Brogdale Site.</p> <p>After questions and discussion, the Committee concluded that:</p> <p>(i) Mr Gough, Mr Gibbons, Mr Hillier and Dr Morgan be thanked for attending the meeting to answer Members' questions.</p> <p>(ii) Letter to be sent on behalf of Committee to Minister as a matter of urgency urging that the collections remain at Brogdale. Action: Mr Gough/Stuart Gibbons/Stuart Ballard. (Note: This letter was sent under the Chairman's name on 13 December 2007.)</p> <p>(iii) Cabinet be recommended to urgently reconsider</p>

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	<p>the Council's position on the future location of the National Fruit Collections, with a view to advising the Minister as a matter of urgency that, in the light of further information that has only recently become available, the Council now urges that the Collections should remain at Brogdale. Action: Mr Gough/Stuart Gibbons/Stuart Ballard.</p> <p>Note: In the light of additional information regarding the tendering process, and following discussion with KCC Cabinet colleagues, Mr Gough has written again to the Minister, Lord Rooker (letter dated 17/12/2007), expressing strong support for the retention of the collections in Kent.</p> <p>(iv) A reminder be issued to Cabinet Members and Managing Directors of the constitutional requirement to consult local Members before taking decisions under delegated powers or when preparing a report for consideration by the Council, Cabinet, Cabinet Member or a Committee. Action: Stuart Ballard.</p> <p>(v) In issuing the reminder in (d) above, Cabinet Members and Managing Directors be requested to interpret the term "local Member" widely, so as to include, as appropriate, Members who represent neighbouring divisions, or divisions whose residents make significant use of the facility concerned. Action: Stuart Ballard.</p>

**Select Committee Topic Review Programme
Reviewed at Policy Overview Co-ordinating Committee 5 November 2007.**

Policy Overview Committee/ Topic Review/Chair	Current Topic Review status and other topics agreed for the period July 2007 to July 2008 * Updated to January 2008.
<p>Children Families and Education :</p> <p>PSHE-Children's Health: Chair Ms CJ CRIBBON</p> <p>Developing the Creative Curriculum#</p> <p>Young People's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development#</p> <p>Vulnerable Children</p>	<p>The Select Committee's report was accepted by Cabinet on 16 April 2007, and was debated at full County Council on 24 July 2007. Annual review scheduled for April 2008. (Research Officer: Gaetano Romagnuolo).</p> <p>#POCC agreed 5/11/2007 that this should be re-bid with other potential topics in February 2008.</p> <p>#POCC agreed 5/11/2007 that this topic should also be re-bid with other potential topics in February 2008.</p> <p>POCC agreed 5/11/2007 this Topic Review should commence in early 2008 when resources become available.</p>
<p>Corporate: Accessing Democracy</p>	<p>POCC agreed 5/11/2007 this Topic Review should commence in late 2007/early 2008 when resources become available.</p>
<p>Communities</p> <p>Student Voice –Consultation and Participation with Young People#</p> <p>Provision of Activities for Young People</p>	<p>#POCC agreed 5/11/2007 that this should be re-bid with other potential topics in February 2008.</p> <p>POCC asked 5/11/2007 for an updated scoping exercise for this work, which POCC will consider in February 2008.</p>

<p>Communities</p> <p>Alcohol Misuse Chairman: MR D HIRST</p>	<p>Inaugural meeting held on 16 May 2007; Hearings were held mid June to the end of July. In view of the importance and complexity of this topic Members of POCC agreed unanimously on 5/11/2007 to an extension of the reporting phase. The Draft Report will be completed in December 2007 and presented to Cabinet in the first quarter of 2008. (Research Officer: Gaetano Romagnuolo)</p>
<p>Adult Services</p> <p>Carers in Kent: MR L CHRISTIE</p>	<p>Inaugural meeting of the Select Committee was held on 5 June 2007, with hearings being held in July/August 2007. The report was presented to, and agreed by, Cabinet on 3 December 2007 and County Council on 13 December 2007. (Research Officer: Pippa Cracknell)</p>
<p>Environment and Regeneration</p> <p>Flood Risk MRS S HOHLER</p>	<p>POCC having agreed that this topic review should proceed as soon as possible, hearings were held during July and August. The report was presented to, and accepted by, Cabinet on 26 November 2007. (Research Officer: Susan Frampton)</p>

jhw/sc 14 January 2008