

REPORT TO: CABINET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 12 December 2007
BY: ASSISTANT TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CABINET SCRUTINY AND POLICY OVERVIEW
Standing Report to December 2007

Summary

1. The report summarises in Table 1 outcomes of the most recent Cabinet Scrutiny Committee (CSC) meeting held on 24 October 2007. Cabinet Members and Chief Officers were provided with a copy of the action sheet and asked to respond as appropriate. The report includes any subsequent responses and actions by Cabinet Members and Senior Officers up to and including the meeting of Cabinet held on 3 December 2007.
2. Additionally, in Table 2 the report provides an updated report 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 24 October 2007 as set out in Table 1;
 - (ii) the current position on Select Committee Topic Reviews.
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Contact Officer: **John Wale 01622 694006**

ACTIONS FOR CABINET/DIRECTORATES FROM CABINET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 24 October 2007

Item/Issue	Actions and Outcomes from Cabinet Scrutiny Committee
A2 Declarations of Interest	None, other than: (i) Dr Eddy informed the Committee that he was a former member of the Strategic Health Authority, but not within the past two years. (ii) Mr Lake informed the meeting that he was a Non-Executive Member of the Kent and Medway Partnership Trust.
A3 Minutes of Cabinet Scrutiny Committee 26 September 2007	The minutes were agreed. Two issues were raised relating to: (i) a Press Release relating to the last meeting being withdrawn since it appeared to differ from what the Committee had agreed. (ii) a question by Mr Fittock on whether KCC could “scrutinize” the operations of the Post Office. Mr Law responded that in his opinion, questions had been answered and facts had been exchanged at the meeting, and these had helped to raise wider awareness of future process.
A4 Informal Member Group on Budgetary issues – 26 September and 11 October 2007.	The minutes were noted. (i) Mr Smyth commented that the IMG would keep a watching eye on Direct Payments and their administrative costs. (ii) Mrs Dean also expressed disappointment that it took 18 months to obtain a report on back-office costs, and yet there was still no information on comparative costs, which in her view were still needed.

ACTIONS FOR CABINET/DIRECTORATES FROM CABINET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 24 October 2007

Item/Issue	Actions and Outcomes from Cabinet Scrutiny Committee
A5 Informal Member Group on Kent Highway Services' Business Plan- 3 October 2007.	<p>The report was noted. This was followed by discussion in which the following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Concern at the apparent lack of detail in the budgets set out within the Business Plan (Mr Hart). (ii) The IMG had serious reservations that the staff structure in the Plan bore no resemblance to that in operation. (Mr Law). Note: The current restructuring post-dated the 2007/08 Business Plan. The Committee asked the Director of Kent Highway Services to provide the information on new structures as soon as possible. ACTION: Mr G Harrison-Mee (iii) It was important to have the views of the new Managing Director for Environment and Regeneration in the next Business Plan 2008/09. (Mr Law) (iv) Mrs Dean commented that whilst evidence within the Plan suggested performance was improving, anecdotal evidence from Parish Councils in her area was the opposite; information from customer questionnaires needed to be quantitative as well as qualitative. (v) Mr Bullock added that the list of faults needed to refer to non-parished areas as well as those with Parish Councils. (vi) Mr Law referred to the KHS Alliance and commented that there was provision to monitor against a wide range of BVPIs and to compare complaints against jobs completed. (vii) Mr Hart asked for confirmation of the first meeting date for the reconvened Thanet Joint Transportation Board. Action: G Harrison-Mee.
A6 Cabinet Scrutiny Committee: Standing Report to October 2007	<p>Report was noted.</p> <p>Referring to Table 2, Dr Eddy asked about the timetable for the proposed Select Committee on Accessing Democracy.</p> <p>Mr Wickenden responded that the agenda for POCC on 5 November would include reference to this item.</p>

ACTIONS FOR CABINET/DIRECTORATES FROM CABINET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 24 October 2007

Item/Issue	Actions and Outcomes from Cabinet Scrutiny Committee
A7 Proposed Additional Meeting-23 April 2008	Members noted that Wednesday 23 April 2008 at 10:00am has been reserved for a possible additional meeting of the Committee should it be needed following the additional Cabinet meeting arranged for 14 April to consider Directorate Business Plans for 2008/09.
C1: Clostridium Difficile Outbreaks at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Hospitals Trust- Report by the Healthcare Commission (Report to Cabinet 15 October 2007)	<p>Mr A J King (Deputy Leader), Mr G Gibbens (Cabinet Member for Public Health, Ms L McMullan (Director of Finance), and Ms Meradin Peachey (Director of Public Health) were present for this item and responded to Members' questions.</p> <p>There was extensive discussion about the Cabinet Report dated 15 October with particular emphasis on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the offer of a returnable loan of £5 million to the Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells Health Trust; and (ii) the proposals to introduce a Local Health Watch in Kent. <p>Following extensive questioning of the Cabinet Members and Chief Officers, the Committee resolved as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) to thank them for attending and explaining in detail the background to the proposals; (ii) the Cabinet's commitment to support the Health Trust is to be commended (iii) the proposals, whilst being helpful, would be improved through consultation and support of the NHS Trusts concerned; (iv) that every effort be put in to the establishment of LINKs as soon as possible, and at the latest by April 2008, rather than creating an additional non-statutory forum such as Health Watch. <p>Resolutions nos (i) to (iii) above were agreed unanimously. Resolution (iv) above was put to the vote and carried by 12 votes for to 3 votes against.</p>

Cabinet Scrutiny Committee: 12 December 2007

Table 2

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 December 2007.
<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 is on target for presentation to Cabinet in 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 agreed by Cabinet on 26 November 2007 and will proceed to County Council for full debate in March 2008. (Research Officer: Susan Frampton)</p>