
From: **Geoff Wild, Director of Governance and Law**

To: **Alex King, Deputy Leader and Cabinet member for Democracy and Partnerships**

Subject: **The future of East Kent Joint Arrangements Committee.**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Summary: This report provides information on the history, remit and recent developments within the East Kent Joint Arrangements Committee and the East Kent Joint Scrutiny Committee and suggests a resolution to the issues recently identified.

Recommendations: The Deputy leader and cabinet Member for Democracy and Partnerships is recommended to dissolve the East Kent Joint Arrangements Committee and recommend to Council the dissolution of the East Kent Joint Scrutiny Committee. Detailed recommendations at paragraph 6.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The East Kent Joint Arrangements Committee (EKJAC) and East Kent Joint Scrutiny Committee (EKJSC) were formed in June 2008 as part of a plan to develop shared working across East Kent with the participation of the four district councils and the county council.
- 1.2 The arrangements envisaged that EKJAC would have a strategic role in overseeing the development of ideas and then a management and monitoring role as services became shared. EKJAC has overseen a significant programme of projects, including proposals for sharing revenues and benefits, information technology, customer contact centres, housing management, human resources and waste..
- 1.3 In May 2010 a review of the arrangements was carried out in an attempt to progress the shared work agenda.
- 1.4 However there has been considerable difficulty for EKJAC in fully implementing the recommendations within the 2010 report. In particular this difficulty has centred on the ability of members of EKJAC to participate in the governance of shared services of which they are not a

part. There has continued to exist some reluctance for member authorities who are not engaged in a particular shared service to have an involvement in its governance. This slowing of progress has been of particular concern to the EKJSC

- 1.5 Therefore a further report was commissioned which EKJAC considered at its meeting on 20 June 2012. This report reviewed the suitability of the formal joint committee arrangements to progress the work to date and the possible options for its work in the future. The EKJSC also considered the report.

2. The need for EKJAC and EKJSC

- 2.1 Over time the relationships between the participating authorities have changed and now the East Kent services for which governance is provided by EKJAC only has three of the five EKJAC members taking part (Canterbury, Dover and Thanet).
- 2.2 Further to this, the strategic oversight that EKJAC is capable of providing for waste issues in the County is not currently live and would not realistically be necessary for some time, possibly 2017.
- 2.3 EKJAC considered these factors alongside others and in particular whether the vision on which the EKJAC had been founded was still relevant to the work of the authorities involved.
- 2.3 The EKJSC was created in order to scrutinise the EKJAC and has done its most valuable work when the proposals for shared services were being fashioned. Should the EKJAC cease to exist with only three remaining participants actively pursuing shared arrangements (as part of this set up), scrutiny can easily and effectively be performed at the point where services are delivered.
- 2.4 It is important to emphasise that the report received by EKJAC concerning its future options related to the formal committee arrangements only. The discussions between all east Kent chief executives and county representatives at the East Kent Forum, the East Kent Leaders and Chief Executives meetings, the East Kent Regeneration Board and discussions on some possible east Kent district arrangement would be entirely undisturbed.

3. Conclusions

- 3.1 Having considered the points above on 20 June 2012, EKJAC resolved that the vision under which EKJAC was originally founded had changed to the point that the Committee was no longer the right vehicle to deliver governance and it was agreed that the Joint Committee should be dissolved.

- 3.2 Each authority must take decisions locally to formally dissolve the Joint Committee. The District Councils have already taken these steps.
- 3.3 Having been established through formal decision making procedures and having both executive and non-executive powers delegated to it via Cabinet and Council, a Cabinet Member decision is needed to dissolve the EKJAC and a resolution of full Council is needed to dissolve the EKJSC.

4. Financial Implications

None.

5. Bold Steps for Kent and Policy Framework

The monitoring, review and improvement of partnerships is crucial to the success of District and County relations and other partnerships. "Partnership working should not exist for its own sake but must provide value and improved outcomes for the residents of Kent" (Bold Steps for Kent). This review, dissolution and eventual replacement with other methods will ensure that that is the case.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 That the Cabinet Member take the following decisions:

As Deputy Leader of Kent County Council I agree that the East Kent Joint Arrangements Committee be dissolved with immediate effect

In addition I agree that any existing delegations related to the functions of the Continuing Councils agenda, including the delegation to the Payroll officer for KCC for the benefit of Shepway District Council, should continue.

I further agree to recommend to full Council the related dissolution of the EKJSC.

7. Background Documents

None

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