

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Kent County Council held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 18 July 2013.

PRESENT:

Mr E E C Hotson (Chairman)
Mr P J Homewood (Vice-Chairman)

Mrs A D Allen, Mr M J Angell, Mr D Baker, Mr M Baldock, Mr M A C Balfour, Mr R H Bird, Mr H Birkby, Mr N J Bond, Mr A H T Bowles, Mr D L Brazier, Mrs P Brivio, Mr R E Brookbank, Mr L Burgess, Mr C W Caller, Miss S J Carey, Mr P B Carter, Mr N J D Chard, Mr I S Chittenden, Mr B E Clark, Mrs P T Cole, Mr G Cooke, Mr G Cowan, Mrs M E Crabtree, Ms C J Cribbon, Mr A D Crowther, Mrs V Dagger, Mr D S Daley, Mr M C Dance, Mr J A Davies, Mrs T Dean, Dr M R Eddy, Mr J Elenor, Mrs M Elenor, Mr G K Gibbens, Mr R W Gough, Ms A Harrison, Mr M J Harrison, Mr M Heale, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr C P D Hoare, Mrs S V Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mrs S Howes, Mr A J King, MBE, Mr J A Kite, MBE, Mr S J G Koowaree, Mr R A Latchford, OBE, Mr R L H Long, TD, Mr G Lymer, Mr B E MacDowall, Mr T A Maddison, Mr S C Manion, Mr R A Marsh, Mr F McKenna, Mr B Neaves, Mr M J Northey, Mr P J Oakford, Mr J M Ozog, Mr R J Parry, Mr C R Pearman, Mr L B Ridings, MBE, Mrs E D Rowbotham, Mr J E Scholes, Mr W Scobie, Mr T L Shonk, Mr C Simkins, Mr J D Simmonds, Mr C P Smith, Mr D Smyth, Mrs P A V Stockell, Mr B J Sweetland, Mr A Terry, Mr N S Thandi, Mr R Truelove, Mr M J Vye, Mr J N Wedgbury, Mrs J Whittle, Mr M E Whybrow, Mr M A Wickham and Mrs Z Wiltshire

IN ATTENDANCE: Geoff Wild (Director of Governance and Law) and Peter Sass (Head of Democratic Services)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

19. Apologies for Absence

The Director of Governance and Law reported apologies for absence from the following Members:

Mr Tom Gates
Mr Peter Harman

20. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Significant Interests

- (1) Mr Hoare made a declaration as a director of a company which helps young people into employment in the construction industry.
- (2) Mr Koowaree made a declaration as he has a grandson who is a looked after child.
- (3) Mr Clark made a declaration in relation to Agenda Item 12: Motion for Time Limited Debate - Motion 1 in that he is a sub postmaster within the Royal Mail Group

and in relation to his question to the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services his home borders the New Line Learning site in Maidstone.

(4) Mr Cowan made a declaration in that both he and his wife are foster carers for Kent County Council.

(5) Mr Latchford made a declaration as a former member of East Kent Opportunities (EKO)

(6) Mr Wedgbury made a declaration as a branch secretary in a trade union but that this was a personal interest and not prejudicial.

(7) Mrs Cole made a declaration in Item 11: Petition Scheme Debate - Extend the Freedom Pass as she had just made an application for the Kent 16+ Travel Card for her daughter.

(8) Mr Long made a declaration as a director of Integrated Service Programme, an independent fostering provider.

(9) Mr Thandi made a declaration as he receives a pension from the Post Office.

(10) Mr Baldock made a declaration as a trade union representative.

(11) Mrs Whittle made a declaration that her husband was the officer lead on Item 8: Facing the Challenge: Whole-Council Transformation.

21. Minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2013 and, if in order, to be approved as a correct record

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2013 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

22. Chairman's Announcements

(a) Death of former County Treasurer Peter Martin

(1) The Chairman stated that it was with regret he had to inform Members of the sad death of Mr Peter Martin, former County Treasurer. Mr Martin passed away on Wednesday 19 June 2013.

(2) Peter joined KCC in June 1981 as Deputy County Treasurer and he took over as County Treasurer in January 1987.

(3) He retired from KCC in 1997 following the local government reorganisation and left behind a legacy of financial management which endures to this day over 14 years since his retirement.

(4) When Peter left KCC he was treasurer for the Kent Police Authority, a role he kept until he took over as treasurer of the Metropolitan Police.

(b) Running order

(5) The Chairman announced that, although the day's agenda was a full one and he could not be sure how it would pan out, the Petition Scheme Debate would commence at 2pm. This would ensure that the external people attending for this item were not waiting around unnecessarily. He asked all Members to ensure that they were present at this time.

(c) The Queen's Awards

(6) The Chairman informed the Council that he was pleased to announce that Kent has secured another three winners of The Queen's Awards for Voluntary Service this year. They were:

- **The Pickering Cancer Drop-in Centre, Tunbridge Wells** which offers emotional support to cancer sufferers, their families and carers together with complementary therapies and counselling;
- **Cobbes Meadow Group Riding for the Disabled, Canterbury** which works at teaching people with disabilities of all ages to ride and improving their physical and mental abilities; and
- **Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit, Dover** which manages two major Roman monuments which are open to the public seven months a year and runs educational workshops.

(d) September meeting

(7) The Chairman advised Members that he had agreed to move the September County Council meeting date from 12th to 19th September. This change of date was due to the fact that a major report had to be submitted to this meeting on which prior formal consultation was required and there is not enough time during August to do this.

(8) The changed date falls during a particularly sensitive inquest and so the Coroner will be using the Darent Room. The Chairman stated that he felt it would be inappropriate for Members to be milling around in the Stone Hall for lunch and so he gave Members notice that lunch would not be provided for this meeting.

(9) He stated that he was aware that it was the party conference season and he regretted the impact that moving the meeting would have on members of the Liberal Democrat Group wishing to attend their party conference in Scotland that week.

(e) Petition – Speed restrictions along Brenchley Road and Coppers Lane, Matfield

(10) The Chairman stated that he had received a petition from Mr Alex King signed by 503 residents living in the Brenchley and Matfield parishes of Tunbridge Wells, which asked KCC to consider the introduction of speed restrictions along parts of Brenchley Road and Coppers Lane in Matfield.

(11) In accordance with usual practice, he invited Mr David Brazier, Cabinet Member for Transport & Environment to approach the dais to accept the petition and ensure that it was investigated and responded to in accordance with the Council's petition scheme.

23. Questions

Under Procedure Rule 1.17 (4) 7 questions were asked and replies given. 3 questions remained unanswered at the end of the thirty minutes and written answers were given.

24. Report by Leader of the Council (Oral)

(1) The Leader stated that since last County Council meeting, the Chancellor's statement had been received and there was little good news in it for local government, particularly in the financial year 2015/16 onwards. How the County Council was going to respond to this major challenge - of a lot less money flowing through revenue support grant to support local government services was the topic for debate later in the day under the item 'Facing the Challenge: Whole Council Transformation'.

(2) The Leader stated that he was pleased to note that unemployment was falling really quite dramatically in the county and was lower than that of the national picture. He was encouraged that every day, new businesses were being established in Kent and existing businesses were growing. The substantial national Government funding for Regional Growth Fund allocations and recent very good news that West Kent would now be the beneficiary of additional Regional Growth Fund meant that the Council would now have at its disposal some £60m worth of recyclable money to support businesses start up and grow, predominantly through interest free loans.

(3) He stated that the county was enormously indebted to those who serve on the Kent Economic Board, our link with the business community in Kent which really was growing from strength to strength. It is interesting, the Leader stated, to see that both the business community in Kent through the links with the Kent Economic Board and more broadly across the South East Local Enterprise Partnership area very much supported the Council's direction of travel and response to the Government consultation on the Third Thames Crossing.

(4) The Leader stated that the Council would continue to work hard to improve the environment conducive to businesses being set up in Kent and businesses to grow. Part of this was clearly seen through the 'Make Kent Quicker' Programme and some of the Highways schemes which, through hard lobbying with national Government, had brought success, examples being the A21 and the pinch point funding at North Farm in Tunbridge Wells.

(5) The Kent Economic Growth Strategy was due out in the autumn and the Leader stated that he very much looked forward to bringing it before the County Council. It was being produced working alongside district colleagues and Kent Economic Board business colleagues to refresh Kent's previous economic development strategy 'Unlocking Kent's Potential'.

(6) He stated that the previous week the Council had hosted a highly successful conference on the roll out of the Troubled Families programme at which the keynote speaker was Louise Casey, the Director General for the Troubled Families programme appointed by the Government. The Leader stated that a great deal of intensive work getting new teams established, multi-agency teams across the 12 districts and boroughs in Kent had preceded the launch of the Troubled Families

programme and he was enormously excited by this programme, and optimistic that it can deliver. Some good news in the Chancellor's statement was that they were extending and expanding the Troubled Families agenda from 2015/16 and beyond.

(7) He finished by stating that he hoped the next day would be a good day for Kent as the Council expected to receive its targeted basic need bid to national Government which hopefully would involve the granting of some £30-40m worth of money to continue to expand against a rising school population in Kent and carry out some much needed modernisation and improvement.

(8) Mr Latchford stated that everyone was aware of the pressures facing the Council to balance the budget against the savage cuts from Government of £239 million. He believed it was a disgrace that Government should continue to offload the responsibility onto County Councils reducing the funding to carry out those responsibilities at the same time as, over a four day period, giving a similar amount to EU and overseas aid.

(9) He stated that it was clear that the Council had to make savings and the Whole-Council Transformation paper would outline the proposals of how to do this. He was very pleased to hear the news from the Leader, he said it was easy to criticise when you did not have responsibility. He stated that the typical definition of opposition was to oppose everything and propose nothing but that he thought the news heard today had been very positive and he would like to congratulate the Leader.

(10) Mr Cowan stated that with regard to the Troubled Families initiative it was very good and very promising but he felt that a lot of new Members would wonder what this was all about and it would be usual at some stage to have a presentation on how exactly the authority was working with those people involved.

(11) He stated that it was good that the unemployment figures were going down but that it would be good if the figures were repeated when they went up as well.

(12) He stated that it had been an interesting few weeks. First there had been the announcement on the consultation about closing 23 of the 97 children's centres and to reduce hours in others. Then there had been the news from the Leader about the whole-Council transformation with all frontline services probably being outsourced which had been badly handled with staff learning of the proposals less than 24 hours before it broke in the media.

(13) Finally Mr Cowan stated that he felt in terms of the Lower Thames Crossing Option 4 – None of the above, could be the option taken.

(14) Mrs Dean stated that she rejoiced, as Mr Carter did, in the fall in unemployment and she welcomed the winning of the £5 million on the Escalate programme although she had concerns about the degree to which industrial development or commercial development there may put yet more traffic onto the A21.

(15) Mrs Dean stated that she also welcomed and supported the Council's move on broadband. However she did express concern that more and more stress was being laid on access to technology to allow Kent residents to report problems, something she felt KCC needed to keep an eye on and be aware of.

(16) Mrs Dean had attended the Troubled Families conference Mr Carter had spoken of and had been delighted to hear Louise Casey pay tribute both to Mr Carter and to Amanda Honey for the way they had supported the Troubled Families programme generally and how Kent had played its part in that. She was concerned however that there were still areas of the county where this programme had not yet started and that there was still much bad practice, 20 practitioners at one case meeting.

(17) Mr Carter thanked Mr Latchford for his gracious comments and agreed with Mrs Dean on the good progress achieved on the Troubled Families agenda and the input being given to support the Kent economy. He also agreed with Mr Cowan, stating that he had said only earlier in the week at Corporate Board that he should write to Mr Pickles and lobby him to put the Council Tax freeze grant into base grant money. He stated that the Children's Centre consultation was a genuine one. He also agreed that a Troubled Families briefing would be a very good idea.

25. Kent Safeguarding Children Board - 2012/13 Annual Report

Maggie Blyth, KSCB Independent Chair was in attendance for this item.

(1) The Chairman invited Ms Blyth, KSCB Independent Chair, to introduce the Annual Report to the Council.

(2) Mrs Whittle moved, Mrs Allen seconded that the Council

- (a) comment on the progress made; and
- (b) note the 2011/12 Annual Report.

(3) RESOLVED: that that the above recommendations be agreed.

26. Facing the Challenge: Whole-Council Transformation

(1) Mr Carter moved, Mr Simmonds seconded that the County Council agree the following recommendations:

- (1) Note the progress that has been made since 2010 in delivering the aims and objectives set out in Bold Steps for Kent.
- (2) Note that £269m of savings have been identified and delivered up to 2013/14;
- (3) Note the approach taken to delivering options to balance the budget for 2014/15;
- (4) Note the additional estimated savings of £239m required between 2015/16 and 2017/18;
- (5) Agree the vision for the Council in 2020 set out in section 4 of the report;
- (6) Agree the outline future service delivery model for the council set out in section 5 of the report;

- (7) Agree the five priorities of whole-council transformation identified in paragraph 6.1 of the report;
- (8) Agree to first phase of service integration as:
 - a) 0-11 children and family support services
 - b) 11-24 support services
 - c) Commissioning functions
 - d) Skills & employability services
- (9) Note the requirement on Corporate Management Team (CMT) by Cabinet to identify further opportunities for service integration;
- (10) Note the creation of a Whole-Council Transformation Board; and
- (11) Note the commissioning of a Whole-Council Transformation Plan for KCC to be considered by the County Council at its next meeting (19 September 2013).

(2) Following the debate the Chairman stated that he intended to put the recommendations which were to vote 'en bloc', (Recommendations 1-4 and 9-11) and separate votes on recommendations 5-8, when the voting was as follows:

Vote 1 on recommendation 5 of Facing the Challenge: Whole-Council Transformation

For (51)

Mrs A Allen, Mr M Angell, Mr M Balfour, Mr N Bond, Mr A Bowles, Mr D Brazier, Mr R Brookbank, Miss S Carey, Mr P Carter, Mr N Chard, Mrs P Cole, Mr G Cooke, Mrs M Crabtree, Mr A Crowther, Mrs V Dagger, Mr M Dance, Mr J Davies, Mr J Elenor, Mrs M Elenor, Mr G Gibbens, Mr R Gough, Mr M Harrison, Mr M Hill, Mrs S Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mr P Homewood, Mr E Hotson, Mr A King, Mr J Kite, Mr R Latchford, Mr R Long, Mr G Lymer, Mr S Manion, Mr A Marsh, Mr B Neaves, Mr M Northey, Mr P Oakford, Mr J Ozog, Mr C Pearman, Mr L Ridings, Mr J Scholes, Mr T Shonk, Mr C Simkins, Mr J Simmonds, Mr C Smith, Mrs P Stockell, Mr B Sweetland, Mr J Wedgbury, Mrs J Whittle, Mr A Wickham, Mrs Z Wiltshire,

Abstain (7)

Mr R Bird, Mr I Chittenden, Mr B Clark, Mr D Daley, Mrs T Dean, Mr A Terry, Mr M Vye

Against (23)

Mr D Baker, Mr M Baldock, Mr H Birkby, Mrs P Brivio, Mr L Burgess, Mr C Caller, Mr G Cowan, Ms J Cribbon, Dr M Eddy, Ms A Harrison, Mr M Heale, Mr C Hoare, Ms S Howes, Mr G Koowaree, Mr B MacDowall, Mr T Maddison, Mr F McKenna, Mrs E Rowbotham, Mr W Scobie, Mr D Smyth, Mr N Thandi, Mr R Truelove, Mr M Whybrow

Carried

Vote 2 on recommendation 6 of Facing the Challenge: Whole-Council Transformation

For (49)

Mrs A Allen, Mr M Angell, Mr M Balfour, Mr A Bowles, Mr D Brazier, Mr R Brookbank, Mr L Burgess, Miss S Carey, Mr P Carter, Mr N Chard, Mrs P Cole, Mr G Cooke, Mrs M Crabtree, Mr A Crowther, Mrs V Dagger, Mr M Dance, Mr J Davies, Mr J Elenor, Mr G Gibbens, Mr R Gough, Mr M Harrison, Mr M Hill, Mrs S Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mr P Homewood, Mr A King, Mr J Kite, Mr R Latchford, Mr R Long, Mr G Lymer, Mr S Manion, Mr A Marsh, Mr B Neaves, Mr M Northey, Mr P Oakford, Mr J Ozog, Mr C Pearman, Mr L Ridings, Mr J Scholes, Mr T Shonk, Mr C Simkins, Mr J Simmonds, Mr C Smith, Mrs P Stockell, Mr B Sweetland, Mr J Wedgbury, Mrs J Whittle, Mr A Wickham, Mrs Z Wiltshire

Abstain (9)

Mr R Bird, Mr N Bond, Mr I Chittenden, Mr B Clark, Mr D Daley, Mrs T Dean, Mr E Hotson, Mr A Terry, Mr M Vye,

Against (22)

Mr D Baker, Mr M Baldock, Mr H Birkby, Mrs P Brivio, Mr C Caller, Mr G Cowan, Ms J Cribbon, Dr M Eddy, Ms A Harrison, Mr M Heale, Mr C Hoare, Ms S Howes, Mr G Koowaree, Mr B MacDowall, Mr T Maddison, Mr F McKenna, Mrs E Rowbotham, Mr W Scobie, Mr D Smyth, Mr N Thandi, Mr R Truelove, Mr M Whybrow

Carried

Vote 3 on recommendation 7 of Facing the Challenge: Whole-Council Transformation was abandoned and run again at the end of the votes

Vote 4 on recommendation 8 of Facing the Challenge: Whole-Council Transformation

For (56)

Mrs A Allen, Mr M Angell, Mr M Balfour, Mr N Bond, Mr A Bowles, Mr D Brazier, Mr R Brookbank, Mr L Burgess, Miss S Carey, Mr P Carter, Mr N Chard, Mrs P Cole, Mr G Cooke, Mrs M Crabtree, Mr A Crowther, Mrs V Dagger, Mr M Dance, Mr J Davies, Mr J Elenor, Mrs M Elenor, Mr G Gibbens, Mr R Gough, Mr M Harrison, Mr M Heale, Mr M Hill, Mrs S Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mr P Homewood, Mr E Hotson, Mr A King, Mr J Kite, Mr R Latchford, Mr R Long, Mr G Lymer, Mr B MacDowall, Mr S Manion, Mr A Marsh, Mr F McKenna, Mr B Neaves, Mr M Northey, Mr P Oakford, Mr J Ozog, Mr C Pearman, Mr L Ridings, Mr J Scholes, Mr T Shonk, Mr C Simkins, Mr J Simmonds, Mr C Smith, Mrs P Stockell, Mr B Sweetland, Mr A Terry, Mr J Wedgbury, Mrs J Whittle, Mr A Wickham, Mrs Z Wiltshire

Abstain (8)

Mr D Baker, Mr R Bird, Mr I Chittenden, Mr B Clark, Mr D Daley, Mrs T Dean, Mr C Hoare, Mr M Vye

Against (17)

Mr M Baldock, Mr H Birkby, Mrs P Brivio, Mr C Caller, Mr G Cowan, Ms J Cribbon, Dr M Eddy, Ms A Harrison, Ms S Howes, Mr G Koowaree, Mr T Maddison, Mrs E Rowbotham, Mr W Scobie, Mr D Smyth, Mr N Thandi, Mr R Truelove, Mr M Whybrow

Carried

Vote 5 on recommendation 7 of Facing the Challenge: Whole-Council Transformation (2nd vote)

For (51)

Mrs A Allen, Mr M Angell, Mr M Balfour, Mr N Bond, Mr A Bowles, Mr D Brazier, Mr R Brookbank, Miss S Carey, Mr P Carter, Mr N Chard, Mrs P Cole, Mr G Cooke, Mrs M Crabtree, Mr A Crowther, Mrs V Dagger, Mr M Dance, Mr J Davies, Mr J Elenor, Mr G Gibbens, Mr R Gough, Mr M Harrison, Mr M Hill, Mrs S Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mr P Homewood, Mr E Hotson, Mr A King, Mr J Kite, Mr R Latchford, Mr R Long, Mr G Lymer, Mr S Manion, Mr A Marsh, Mr B Neaves, Mr M Northey, Mr P Oakford, Mr J Ozog, Mr C Pearman, Mr L Ridings, Mr J Scholes, Mr T Shonk, Mr C Simkins, Mr J Simmonds, Mr C Smith, Mrs P Stockell, Mr B Sweetland, Mr A Terry, Mr J Wedgbury, Mrs J Whittle, Mr A Wickham, Mrs Z Wiltshire

Abstain (6)

Mr R Bird, Mr I Chittenden, Mr B Clark, Mr D Daley, Mrs T Dean, Mr M Vye

Against (24)

Mr D Baker, Mr M Baldock, Mr H Birkby, Mrs P Brivio, Mr L Burgess, Mr C Caller, Mr G Cowan, Ms J Cribbon, Dr M Eddy, Mrs M Elenor, Ms A Harrison, Mr M Heale, Mr C Hoare, Ms S Howes, Mr G Koowaree, Mr B MacDowall, Mr T Maddison, Mr F McKenna, Mrs E Rowbotham, Mr W Scobie, Mr D Smyth, Mr N Thandi, Mr R Truelove, Mr M Whybrow

Carried

All the other recommendations within the report were carried without a vote.

(2) RESOLVED that the County Council:

- (1) Note the progress that has been made since 2010 in delivering the aims and objectives set out in Bold Steps for Kent.
- (2) Note that £269m of savings have been identified and delivered up to 2013/14;
- (3) Note the approach taken to delivering options to balance the budget for 2014/15;
- (4) Note the additional estimated savings of £239m required between 2015/16 and 2017/18;

- (5) Agree the vision for the Council in 2020 set out in section 4 of the report;
- (6) Agree the outline future service delivery model for the council set out in section 5 of the report;
- (7) Agree the five priorities of whole-council transformation identified in paragraph 6.1 of the report;
- (8) Agree to first phase of service integration as:
 - a) 0-11 children and family support services
 - b) 11-24 support services
 - c) Commissioning functions
 - d) Skills & employability services
- (9) Note the requirement on Corporate Management Team (CMT) by Cabinet to identify further opportunities for service integration;
- (10) Note the creation of a Whole-Council Transformation Board; and
- (11) Note the commissioning of a Whole-Council Transformation Plan for KCC to be considered by the County Council at its next meeting (19 September 2013).

27. Petition Scheme Debate - Extend the Freedom Pass

- (1) The Chairman invited Matt Stanley, the spokesman for lead petitioner, to address the Council on the above petition. Matt Stanley spoke to the petition.
- (2) The Chairman then opened up the debate to the floor and a number of Members spoke on the petition.
- (3) The Chairman then invited the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment, Mr Brazier, to respond to the debate and describe how he intended to take the petitioner's concerns forward.
- (4) Mr Caller proposed, Mr Cowan seconded the following motion:

'That the outcome of the review referred to in the recommendation on page 71 of the Council agenda be considered at a special meeting to be called in time for a decision to be made and implemented before the start of the new academic year for 2013/14.'
- (5) However, the deadline for the review was the following day (Friday 19 July) and therefore Mr Caller withdrew his motion.
- (6) Mr Brazier proposed, Mr Gough seconded that the County Council agree that the issues raised by the petition be considered within the context of a wider review currently being undertaken into the County Council's sponsorship of bus services through the Kent Freedom Pass, with a further report back to full Council in October.

(7) RESOLVED that the above recommendation be agreed.

28. Members' Travel Expenses

(1) Sharon Addis and Steve Wiggett, members of the Member Remuneration Panel, were in attendance for this item.

(2) Mr Carter moved, Mr Simmonds seconded that the County Council accept the current guidance of HMRC and agree to implement Option 1.

Carried without a vote

(3) RESOLVED that the County Council accept HMRC guidance and implement Option 1.

29. Committee Membership

(1) Mr Cooke proposed, Mrs Allen seconded that County Council:

(a) agree the following Committee appointments:

Governance & Audit Committee – Mr Martin Whybrow

Planning Applications Committee – Mr Peter Harman

Regulation Committee – Mr Peter Harman; and

(b) note that Mr Martin Whybrow has been appointed to serve on the Environment, Highways and Waste Cabinet Committee.

(2) RESOLVED that the above recommendations be agreed and noted.

30. Motions for Time Limited Debate

Motion for Time Limited Debate 1

(1) Mr G Cowan proposed, Mr W Scobie seconded the following Motion for Time Limited Debate:

This Council recognises that reform of the Crown Post Office Network is necessary and long overdue. This Council also welcomes progress being made to this end, with losses reduced by up to £14m, to around £37m, in the past three years.

Nevertheless, proposed reforms have the potential to disproportionately impact on Kent people – as part of a plan to close or franchise 76 Crown Post Offices nationwide – two are located in Kent: Margate and Whitstable Crown Offices.

Despite only representing 3% of the postal network, Crown Post Offices employ 4000 people and are responsible for 20% of all Post Office business. Crown Post Offices also process 40% of financial services mail and are therefore a crucial component of Kent's economy.

Post Offices not only provide essential services to the public that are not available anywhere else, but they are also central to the local economies in which they are located. This Council is concerned at the potential adverse impacts on Post Office accessibility for Kent's population and the business community.

This Council therefore calls on the Leader of Council to:

- write to the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State with responsibility for Post Offices, informing them of the concerns raised by the Council about the franchising of the two of Kent's Crown Post Offices; Margate & Whitstable (if they were both to go to a franchise, neither would be able to provide all the current services and the nearest Crown Post Office available would be either Ashford or Faversham. This would not be in the best interest of our communities);
- request that Under-Secretary undertake to conduct a broader social and economic assessment of the proposed franchising, focussing on the impact on customers; and
- seek assurances from the Under-Secretary that successful franchisees for Crown Post Offices will be strongly encouraged to pay their staff the current rate for the job and guarantee the community would be able to receive all services provided by the Crown Post Office.

(2) Following a debate, the Chairman put to the vote the motion as set out above, when the voting was as follows:

For (34)

Mr D Baker, Mr M Baldock, Mr R Bird, Mr H Birkby, Mr N Bond, Mrs P Brivio, Mr L Burgess, Mr C Caller, Mr I Chittenden, Mr G Cowan, Ms J Cribbon, Mr D Daley, Mrs T Dean, Dr M Eddy, Ms A Harrison, Mr M Heale, Mr C Hoare, Ms S Howes, Mr G Koowaree, Mr R Latchford, Mr B MacDowall, Mr T Maddison, Mr F McKenna, Mr B Neaves, Mrs E Rowbotham, Mr W Scobie, Mr T Shonk, Mr D Smyth, Mr A Terry, Mr N Thandi, Mr R Truelove, Mr M Vye, Mr M Whybrow, Mrs Z Wiltshire

Abstain (2)

Miss S Carey, Mr B Clark

Against (43)

Mrs A Allen, Mr M Angell, Mr M Balfour, Mr D Brazier, Mr R Brookbank, Mr P Carter, Mrs P Cole, Mr G Cooke, Mrs M Crabtree, Mr A Crowther, Mrs V Dagger, Mr M Dance, Mr J Davies, Mr J Elenor, Mrs M Elenor, Mr G Gibbens, Mr R Gough, Mr M Harrison, Mr M Hill, Mrs S Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mr P Homewood, Mr E Hotson, Mr A King, Mr J Kite, Mr R Long, Mr G Lymer, Mr S Manion, Mr A Marsh, Mr M Northey, Mr P Oakford, Mr J Ozog, Mr C Pearman, Mr L Ridings, Mr J Scholes, Mr C Simkins, Mr J Simmonds, Mr C Smith, Mrs P Stockell, Mr B Sweetland, Mr J Wedgbury, Mrs J Whittle, Mr A Wickham

Lost

Motion for Time Limited Debate 2

(3) Mrs T Dean proposed, Mr M Vye seconded the following Motion for Time Limited Debate:

This Council agrees to issue guidelines to make it clear that council meetings are public and may be filmed, tweeted about or blogged with the exception of exempt agenda items.

(4) Mr G Cooke proposed, Mr P Carter seconded the following amendment to the motion that this Council:

- i) acknowledges and notes that work has already been undertaken in relation to the issuance of policy guidelines covering the filming of public meetings in line with the guidance document; “Your Council’s Cabinet – going to its meetings, seeing how it works”, issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in June 2013; and
- ii) that a report setting out how Kent County Council will provide reasonable facilities for members of the public attending public meetings, together with provision for the filming of councillors and officers at public meetings, with the exception of exempt agenda items, in a way that is neither obtrusive or disruptive, will be presented to the next meeting of the Selection and Member Services Committee in September for consideration.

(5) Following debate the Chairman then asked if Members agreed the amendment to the original motion and it was agreed.

(6) RESOLVED that the substantive motion set out in paragraph (4) i) and ii) above be agreed as amended.

31. Minutes for Information

Pursuant to Procedure Rule 1.10(8) and 1.23(4), the minutes of the Planning Applications Committee meetings held on 23 May and 7 June 2013 and the minutes of the Regulation Committee meetings held on 23 May and 18 June 2013 were noted.