

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

POLICY OVERVIEW CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Policy Overview Co-ordinating Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 10 September 2008.

PRESENT: Mr E E C Hotson (Chairman), Ms A Harrison (Vice-Chairman), Dr M R Eddy, Mr R A Pascoe, Mr J D Simmonds, Mr D Smyth, Mr D S Daley (Substitute for Mrs T Dean) and Mrs E M Tweed (Substitute for Mrs S V Hohler)

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs C Angell and Mr R Truelove

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms D Fitch (Assistant Democratic Service Manager (Policy Overview)), Mr R Hardy (Head of Improvement And Engagement) and Miss J Clarke (Head Of Communications & Media Centre)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

21. Membership

(Item 1)

RESOLVED that it be noted that Mr J D Simmonds, Mr R F Manning and Mr B R Cope have replaced Mr C J Law, Mr L B Ridings and Lord Bruce-Lockhart , respectively as Members of this Committee

22. Minutes - 23 May 2008

(Item 4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Meeting held on 23 May 2008 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

23. Notes of the Meetings of the POCC IMG

(Item 6)

RESOLVED that the notes of the meetings of the POCC IMG held on 25 June 2008 and 25 July 2008 be approved.

24. Launching and publicising Select Committee Topic reviews

(Item 9)

(Miss J Clarke Head of Communications & Media Centre was present for this item)

(1) The Committee received a report which set out the views of the POCC IMG *which* considered how the County Council could improve the publishing and launching of Select Committee Topic Review reports. The IMG recommended a public relations protocol for Select Committee Topic Reviews, for incorporating in the County Council Constitution.

(2) Miss Clarke stated that supported the proposed protocol and was working with the Overview and Scrutiny team in relation with current Select Committee reviews and their promotion and report launch.

(3) Members discussed the draft protocol and made a number of suggestions for minor amendments. It was emphasised that the protocol may need to be amended in the light of experience, but that it was important to have a document embedded into the constitution to form the basis of the promotion of future topic reviews.

(4) RESOLVED (a) that the Protocol, attached as Appendix 1, be submitted to County Council for approval for incorporation into the Constitution;

(b) that the process for launching Select Committee Topic reviews be endorsed and submitted to the County Council for approval and embedding in the Constitution.

25. Select Committee Topic Review Work Programme

(Item 8)

(1) Mr Wickenden introduced a report which updated Members on the current Select Committee Topic Review programme and the resources available to deliver it.

(2) Mr Simmonds, the Chairman of the Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Select Committee, set out the reasons why the Select Committee had requested a short extension to enable them to present their report to the January meeting of the Cabinet rather than the December meeting. He attempted to address the concern that had been raised about the Select Committee gather evidence on ASD in children/young people and explained that as the transition to adulthood and the remit of Adult Social Services was key it was important that the Select Committee had a basic understanding of the issues with Autism for children. He emphasised that this was a review which has focused on the Adult Social Services issues of ASD.

(3) RESOLVED that (a) the progress of the Select Committee Topic Reviews Accessing Democracy, Provision of Activities for Young People and CTRLR Passenger Services be noted;

(b) the ASD Select Committee be allowed to extend its timescale and submit its report to Cabinet in January 2009;

(c) the resources suggested for undertaking the Accessing Healthcare Select Committee Topic Review be endorsed;

(d) the Chairman and spokesmen meet informally to discuss how ad-hoc Member Committees/Groups are to be accommodated in the work programme.

26. Work Programme and Resources

(Item 5)

(1) The Chairman read out a memo from the Chief Executive setting out his suggestions for providing resources to support Select Committee topic review. These included the talent management pool, Cabinet Members Staff officers and Secondments. The memo also reiterated the view that that supporting a Select Committee Topic review was not an appropriate use of the Kent Graduate Programme.

(2) Mr Hardy, representing the Chief Executive, answered questions from Members on the suggestions put forward and also referred Members to the CTRL Select Committee which was being supported by the Environment and Regeneration Directorate.

(3) Mr Wickenden reminded Members that the research officer resources within the Overview and Scrutiny Team were 2.5 full time equivalent posts and a dedicated research officer for health overview and Scrutiny.

(4) Members emphasised the importance of having a robust work programme which was agreed for a two year period and reviewed regularly.

(5) RESOLVED that (a) a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee on the range of office support available for Select Committee and IMG's.

(b) the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Lib-Democrat spokesman discuss the matter of Member resources for Select Committees and IMG's and report back to the next meeting of the Committee.

(c) at the next meeting consideration be give to potential Select Committee topics for the work programme.

27. Corporate Assessment Outline Improvement Plan

(Item 7)

(1) Mr Hardy presented a report which explained that In response to the CPA Corporate Assessment report, published on June 3rd 2008, a draft Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) following the comments and conclusions of the CA report would be considered by the Corporate Policy Overview Committee (POC) on September 26th. That report (as amended following the meeting) will then be considered by the full County Council meeting in December. A copy of the Corporate Assessment report is attached as Appendix 1.

(2) In response to a question on why the PIP was not being taken to the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee, Mr Hardy replied that the Corporate POC's remit covered many of the PIP areas. Also the Leader had given a commitment that there would be a full Council debate. However, Mr Hardy was happy to submit this to Cabinet Scrutiny Committee if required.

(3) RESOLVED that the report be noted

28. Dates of meetings in 2009

RESOLVED that the following dates for meetings in 2009 be noted:-

11 February 2009

April 2009 (date to be confirmed)

9 September 2009

All meetings will commence at 10.00 am

(Post meeting note – 28 April 2009 has been agreed with the Chairman)

29. "Communities in Control: Real People , Real Power" - Consultation

(1) Mr Wickenden referred Members to the "Communities in Control: Real People ,Real Power" consultation paper which had been issued in July. The consultation period was due to close on 31 October 2008.

(2) RESOLVED that the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Liberal Democrat Spokesman would consider making a response to this consultation on behalf of the Committee.