

# KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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MINUTES of a meeting of the Kent County Council held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 10 December 2015.

## PRESENT:

Mr M J Harrison (Chairman)

Mr T Gates (Vice-Chairman)

Mrs A D Allen, MBE, Mr M J Angell, Mr M Baldock, Mr M A C Balfour, Mr R H Bird, Mr H Birkby, 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, CBE, 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 J Dagger, Mr D S Daley, Mr M C Dance, Mr J A Davies, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Dr M R Eddy, Mr J Elenor, Mrs M Elenor, Mr G K Gibbens, Mr R W Gough, Ms A Harrison, Mr M Heale, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr C P D Hoare, Mrs S V Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mr P J Homewood, Mr E E C Hotson, 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 R A Marsh, 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 T L Shonk, Mr C Simkins, Mr C P Smith, Mr D Smyth, Mr B J Sweetland, Mr N S Thandi, Mr R Truelove, Mr M J Vye, Mrs C J Waters, Mr J N Wedgbury, Mrs J Whittle, Mr M E Whybrow, Mr M A Wickham and Mrs Z Wiltshire

IN ATTENDANCE: David Cockburn (Corporate Director Strategic & Corporate Services), Geoff Wild (Director of Governance and Law), Peter Sass (Head of Democratic Services), Andy Wood (Corporate Director Finance and Procurement), Amanda Beer (Corporate Director Engagement, Organisation Design & Development), Barbara Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport), Emma Mitchell (Director of Strategic Business Development and Intelligence) and Andrew Scott-Clark (Director of Public Health)

## UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

### **44. Apologies for Absence**

The Director of Governance and Law reported apologies from Mr Bond, Mr Harman, Mr McKenna, Mr Scobie, Mrs Stockell and Mr Terry.

### **45. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Significant Interests in items on the agenda**

(1) Mr Cowan declared an interest in that both he and his wife were KCC foster carers.

(2) Mr Clark declared an interest in item 8 (Dependent Carers' Allowance) as he had two young children and stated that he would be withdrawing from the meeting when that item was considered.

(3) Mrs Whittle declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item 8 –(Dependent Carers' Allowance) and stated that she would be withdrawing from the meeting when that item was considered.

**46. Minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2015 and, if in order, to be approved as a correct record**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2015 be approved as a correct record subject to "£" being deleted from the last sentence in paragraph (20) of minute no 41.

**47. Chairman's Announcements**

**(a) The Chairman's Long Service Award for Members**

(1) The Vice-Chairman presented a long service award to the Chairman.

**(b) Emma Mitchell**

(2) The Chairman introduced Ms Emma Mitchell who joined KCC at the end of September as Director, Strategic Business Development and Intelligence.

(3) Ms Mitchell was invited to introduce herself and briefly set out her role.

**(4) Royal Tunbridge Wells Heritage, Cultural & Learning Hub - Heritage Lottery Fund support**

(5) The Chairman stated that he was pleased to announce that the Cultural Hub, which was a partnership project between Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Kent County Council had been successful in its stage one bid for Heritage Lottery Fund support.

(6) Mr Hill was invited to speak and commended this project, which would bring together the museum, art gallery, library and adult education into a new cultural hub in the centre of Royal Tunbridge Wells.

**(d) Democratic Services Officer of the Year – Theresa Grayell.**

(7) The Chairman announced that Miss Theresa Grayell had been awarded Democratic Services Officer of the Year by the Association of Democratic Services Officers, which represented governance officers from local authorities across the Country.

(8) Miss Grayell was presented with her award by the Chairman.

**(e) LGC Investment Award for the best performing local authority pension fund in property in 2014/15**

(9) The Chairman congratulated the Superannuation Fund Committee, under the chairmanship of Mr Scholes and officers on the Kent Pension Fund winning the LGC Investment Award for the best performing local authority pension fund in property in 2014/15, 89 other funds were considered for this award.

(10) The Chairman explained that the Fund had around £600m invested in property with £450m of that invested in direct UK property managed by DTZ Investors and with KCC Finance acting as client. The award was on display at the meeting.

**(d) Petition - Dorothy Lucy Centre, Maidstone**

(11) The Chairman invited Mr Clark to present a petition relating to the proposed closure of the Dorothy Lucy Centre, Maidstone.

**(e) Petition - Kiln Court, Faversham**

(12) The Chairman invited the Vice Chairman to present a petition relating to the proposed closure of Kiln Court, Faversham.

(13) The Chairman then invited Mr Gibbens, the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, to approach the dais to collect the petitions and to ensure that they are responded to in accordance with the Petition Scheme.

**(f) Kent youth flag for the 'Magna Carta Foundation of Liberty' event**

(14) The chairman displayed the flag designed by young people in Kent, which had been flown at two events in Parliament Square between 15 - 22 May 2015 to commemorate the 750th anniversary of the Montfort Parliament of 1265

**(g) The Year So Far**

(15) The Chairman introduced a PowerPoint slide show which illustrated some of the events which he and the Vice-Chairman had attended since the previous meeting of the County Council.

**(h) Carols**

(16) The Chairman invited all Members to join him for carols from the Maidstone Singers in the Stone Hall at lunchtime.

**48. Questions**

In accordance with Procedure Rule 1.17(4), six questions were put and the answers given at the meeting. These were available [online](#) with the papers for this meeting.

#### **49. Report by Leader of the Council (Oral)**

(1) The Chairman stated that he had agreed to the Leader being allowed extra time to present his update but that the time for the Leader to reply would be reduced.

(2) The Leader updated the Council on discussions with the Home Office in the support of asylum seekers in Kent, the implications of the Autumn Statement/the Spending Review for Kent County Council and on the amendments to the Cities and Devolution Bill

(3) In relation to the Home Office negotiations in support of unaccompanied asylum seeking young people, he reported that the grant to support the various differing age categories had been increased substantially. In this financial year, £5.2 million of extra grant had been allocated. He expressed his gratitude for the work of Home Office officials and the Immigration Minister, Mr Brokenshire, MP, to achieve this positive outcome. Discussions with the Home Office were continuing including, for the next financial year, issues relating to the 18-plus care leavers. Mr Carter stated that there was a need to keep within the current grant allocation, particularly in relation to the accommodation strategy and commissioning the appropriate support for these young people.

(4) Mr Carter reminded the Council that the Immigration Minister had increased the grants for unaccompanied asylum seekers in an endeavour to encourage more authorities across the country to voluntarily take on full responsibility for many of Kent's asylum seeking youngsters. The take up had had been slow and, therefore, the regulations under the immigration bill would enable the Home Secretary to direct the dispersal of unaccompanied minors out of Kent into other parts of the country. After much lobbying, Government had accepted that Kent could no longer continue to shoulder the full responsibility of care for these 1400 young people.

(5) Mr Carter made reference to the autumn statement and the importance of the detail; for example, he welcomed an increase in the better care fund, outside of health service money, to a total cost of £1.5 billion per annum. However, this would be partially funded through the changes in the new homes bonus funding and he understood that this additional money would not be available until the financial year 2017/18. The new homes bonus was not new money from Government; it was redistributed from the revenue support grant pot. Also those with planning responsibilities, i.e. unitary, Metropolitan and London boroughs would benefit at the expense of counties.

(6) Mr Carter welcomed the option in the autumn statement to raise an additional 2% precept to help fund the adult social care demand-led pressures. He referred to the impact of the living wage on social care. Kent was at a disadvantage compared to London and Surrey due to having a lower wage economy in parts of the county. Counties had a much greater proportion of elderly people, particularly over 75, living within their communities; however, London boroughs currently received four times the amount of funding that Kent received within their revenue support grant. It was essential that care providers were treated fairly and that there was a strong vibrant and growing private sector and charitable sector care market in Kent.

(7) Mr Carter anticipated that most authorities with social care responsibilities would be taking up the precept, if the County Council decided to so it would

regrettably fall on Kent householders. In an area such as Kent, where there were areas of poverty, there was a greater proportion of “state-funders” as opposed to “self-funders” which put a substantial burden on the County Council’s social care budgets.

(8) In relation to County Council reserves, Mr Carter stated that he had made the Secretary of State aware that reserves should be measured against the risk that the authority was carrying and, of course, the substantial borrowing requirements that Kent County Council endured. Kent County Council currently had approaching £1 billion to deliver capital projects, most of which was supported borrowing over the 25 year period to pay the interest and the re-payments. In building the Thanet Way, the East Kent access roads, schools and a number of significant capital projects, Kent County Council was losing about £15 million a year as revenue support grant reduced. He referred to Hampshire County Council who had massive reserves and very small borrowing. He hoped that the Autumn Statement would be better news for Kent County Council in helping it to meet its medium term budget needs.

(9) In relation to the devolution bill, Mr Carter referred to the third reading in the House of Commons earlier that week and expressed the view that although ground had been gained on the unnecessary imposition of directly elected mayors, it appeared from the amendment debate that there was potential for the Secretary of State to be given powers to change County boundaries at will. He had been subsequently been told by the Secretary of State for Local Government and Communities, Mr Clark, MP, that county boundaries were sacrosanct and only in extreme circumstances would this change in regulation be applied. Mr Carter expressed the view that there was a need to make sure that the great track record of county governance in this country was recognised and county boundaries were preserved.

(10) Mr Latchford, Leader of the Opposition, referred to the awaited financial settlement and agreed with the Leader that the devil would be in the detail. He stated that despite the rhetoric from government, national borrowing continued to increase and that the national debt was higher than it had ever been. An increasing number of responsibilities were being devolved from Government to Councils and any short fall in resources for these were falling on the Kent tax payer. He referred to the overseas aid budget, which exceeded the Home Office budget at a time when the world was an uncertain place due, for example, to terrorism.

(11) Mr Latchford made reference to £250m for Operation Stack which would appear to be good news. He referred to a memo from the KCC Cabinet Member and Director on 15 September 2015 which stated that the preliminary cost would be £468m, he asked how the deficit would be met. He expressed his appreciation to those who had to plan KCC’s budget and manage such severe restraints.

(12) Moving on to devolution, which Mr Latchford supported in principle, he referred to a suggestion that central government should be able to claw back some powers if they considered it reasonable to do so. His group believed that if powers were devolved then Councils should be able to exercise those powers in the knowledge that funding was secure for the short and long term. There were many questions relating to devolution that needed to be answered, including where would Medway fit in to the Kent issue and would any devolution plans involve a more regional plan.

(13) Regarding young asylum seekers and the welcome extra grant of £5m, he expressed concern about migration where government had failed to meet their targets and borders were unsafe and insecure. He referred to a report to the Children's Social Care and Public Health Cabinet Committee on 2 December, which analysed the serious situation facing Kent and the ever increasing number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children and expressed sympathy to these young people who were a desperate situation of uncertainty, without parental care. He commended front line staff for their hard work and compassion in the way in which they had carried out this increasing responsibility. He referred to the ongoing discussions at government level to identify a suitable distribution of responsibility both financially and logistically, whilst being compassionate and caring to these young people. He stressed that this was an unfair burden on the Kent tax payer due the County being an UK entry point.

(14) Mr Latchford referred to the Select Committee on Corporate Parenting, which had produced an excellent report under the Chairmanship of Mrs Wiltshire and thanked the Leader for allocating the Chairmanship to his group. He stated that it would be nice to see more chairmanships being offered to political groups other than the Conservatives.

(15) In conclusion, Mr Latchford mentioned growth and infrastructure; he recognised that there was a £2 billion infrastructure shortfall due to unsustainable levels of housing development being forced on Kent by the Government. This was a major issue that needed to be addressed.

(16) Mr Cowan, Leader of the Labour Group, referred to the recent Scrutiny Budget training and expressed disappointment that only three Members of the Administration had attended. In relation to the Chancellor's pledge to remove the structural budget deficit and have an annual surplus by the end of this Parliament, Mr Cowan stated that on 25 November the Chancellor had confirmed that the period of austerity would now last another 5 years. Local government comparatively continued to bear the largest burden of the cut back compared to other government departments and government tended to blame local government for any short comings in delivery. He made reference to the impact of increases in the cost of social care caused by the introduction of the living wage and inflationary pressures.

(17) In relation to Kent County Council's budget, he stated that it looked like there was £81m of cuts already written into the 2016/17 budget which would have an impact on services. He referred to the 2015/16 budget review presented to Cabinet in November, which showed that the overspend position remained at £6.586m. This illustrated the difficulty in reaching a balanced budget in the current year. He mentioned the monies, such as the new homes bonus, which was not new money.

(18) Regarding asylum seekers, he welcomed the money from Government but reminded the Leader that the money that the County Council was being given was what they used to receive over 5 years ago. Therefore the County Council was not receiving any additional money but was back where it had been some years previously. It was important that the County Council did its utmost to ensure that these children were looked after.

(19) Mrs Dean, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, welcomed the proposed national dispersal system for unaccompanied asylum seekers by regulation and

hoped that when this was in place the County Council would lobby for a similar arrangement for local authorities who placed their looked after children in Kent. Time has shown that a voluntary system did not work.

(20) In relation to the local government settlement, Mrs Dean stated that the Chancellor, when announcing the additional funding for social services, did not mention that this money would come from additional council tax, what local authorities were actually being given was money raising powers. These powers would only meet £11-£12m of the £42m required. This would be the County Council's biggest challenge, as it had been last year and would be for many years until somebody solved the problem of how to fund elderly care.

(21) Mrs Dean questioned the statement from government that it was going to remove schools completely from local authority control, as local authorities had not controlled schools for 20 years. She also made reference to the national funding formula to be adopted for schools which might or might not benefit Kent.

(22) Regarding devolution, Mrs Dean agreed with the Leaders' concern about the changes, not only in the Cities and Devolution Bill but also in the Housing and Planning Bill, where huge changes were proposed for the planning process. These changes would affect the ability of local people to challenge planning permissions. MPs in Parliament had agreed the new laws which not only allowed them to set local authority boundaries but to strip county councils of those functions that combined district authorities may have devolved to them. She believed that these two pieces of legislation were being amended on a daily basis.

(23) Mrs Dean referred to the statement by the Leader that he was not expecting to have a bid for devolution until the end of this financial year, whereas he had previously said that that the bid would be with the Secretary of State by the end of February. She stated that district councils were talking about a three way split across the county. She mentioned that she had attended a briefing by the Town and Country Planning Association on the Housing and Planning Bill and their conclusion was that it looked like a move to unitary councils by another name. There needed to be more debate about the whole issue as at the moment neither members nor the public knew what was happening.

(24) Mr Whybrow, Leader of the Independents Group, referred to unaccompanied asylum seekers and a recent visit to the Ladesfield Centre with the Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services. Mr Whybrow commended the extremely hard working, dedicated, caring staff trying to make the best of a difficult situation. He was pleased to hear about the proposed dispersal regulations and hoped that these youngsters would get a stable, safe and permanent way forward so they could recover from the trauma and rebuild their lives.

(25) In relation to the Autumn Statement, Mr Whybrow referred to the conclusion by the King's Fund that if every local authority in the country was to raise council tax by 2% to pay for social care it would raise about £800 million, not the £2 billion that the government stated. The amount raised would not fill the chronic funding shortfall for social care. He also found it illogical that there was going to be cuts to public health when prevention was so pivotal to actually maintaining services for residents, this would seem to be a false saving.

(26) In conclusion, Mr Whybrow made reference to the impact of the proposed lorry park on residents of Stanford. That part of Kent had already had much infrastructure forced upon it over the years and this proposal was going to potentially be more blight. He mentioned the impact of the flooding in Cumbria and stated that the reality of climate change in the UK was more rainfall, more floods, the army mobilised and devastated homes and lives.

(27) In replying to the other Leaders' comments, Mr Carter referred to the comments made by Mr Latchford on the Cities and Devolution Bill and agreed that this was more about centralisation than devolution, as illustrated by the treatment of education. Kent currently received £14 million in grant. This was primarily support to school improvement and education welfare, which would reduce to £4 million next year. The County Council had a strong track record of supporting schools to raise their standards and therefore this was a retrograde step in the improvement of school outcomes.

(28) In response to Mr Cowan's comments, Mr Carter stated that the Chancellor's economic policy had led to strong economic growth. He hoped that Kent would get a fair share of the additional £24 billion, raised through taxes generated by the stronger economy.

(29) Mr Carter confirmed that in relation to looked after children placed in Kent by other local authorities, the County Council had been lobbying for many years to get a change in regulations, and that he would continue to do so.

(30) On the issue raised by Mrs Dean about the potential for Kent and counties to be split, Mr Carter stated that he would do all that he could, both as Leader of Kent County Council and as Chairman of the County Councils' Network, to make sure that strategic county councils were preserved. He mentioned the statement by Mr Osborne, MP in 2009 expressing the Conservative party's commitment to devolving power to local government.

## **50. Proposed establishment of the Statutory Officer Independent Panel**

(1) The Chairman referred to the additional information on the Independent Persons which had been circulated to all Members.

(2) Mr Cooke moved and Mr Carter seconded the following motion:

“The County Council is invited to approve the establishment of and Terms of Reference for the Statutory Officer Independent Panel, together with the necessary amendments to the Constitution as set out in Sections 5 and 6 above.”

(3) The motion was agreed without a formal vote.

(4) **RESOLVED** that the establishment of and Terms of Reference for the Statutory Officer Independent Panel, together with the necessary amendments to the Constitution as set out in Sections 5 and 6 in the report, be approved.



### **51. Dependent Carers' Allowance**

- (1) Mr Cooke moved and Mrs Allen seconded the following motion:

“The County Council is asked to agree the rewording of the Dependent Carers’ Allowance paragraph in the Members’ Allowance Scheme as set out in paragraph 3 (2) above.”

- (2) The motion was agreed without a formal vote.

(3) RESOLVED that the rewording of the Dependent Carers’ Allowance paragraph in the Members’ Allowance Scheme as set out in paragraph 3 (2) of the report be approved.

*(Mrs Whittle and Mr Clark, in accordance with the interests that they had declared earlier in the meeting, withdrew from the meeting for the consideration and determination of this item).*

### **52. Strategic Support to the Corporate Director Social Care Health & Wellbeing**

- (1) Mr Carter moved and Mr Cooke seconded the following motion

“The County Council is asked to approve the establishment of a new senior level role in the Social Care Health and Wellbeing Directorate.”

- (2) The motion was agreed without a formal vote

(3) RESOLVED that the establishment of a new senior level role in the Social Care Health and Wellbeing Directorate be approved

### **53. Select Committee - Corporate Parenting**

- (1) Mr Oakford moved and Mrs Whittle seconded the following motion:

“County Council is asked to:

applaud the Select Committee’s work for producing an instructive and timely report;

recognise the contribution of the witnesses who provided evidence and the officers who supported the Select Committee’s work;

endorse the report and its recommendations.”

- (2) The motion was agreed without a formal vote.

(3) RESOLVED that the Select Committee’s work to produce an instructive and timely report be applauded, the contribution of the witnesses who provided evidence

and the officers who supported the Select Committee's work be recognised and the report and its recommendations be endorsed.

#### **54. Health and Wellbeing Board - Annual Report**

(1) Mr Gough moved and Mr Gibbens seconded the following motion:

“That the County Council is asked to agree that the Kent Health and Wellbeing Board has fulfilled its responsibilities under its Terms of Reference and to note the comments made by Members on the issues identified in the report for further consideration.”

(2) The motion was agreed without a formal vote

(3) RESOLVED that the Kent Health and Wellbeing Board has fulfilled its responsibilities under its Terms of Reference and that the comments made by Members on the issues identified in the report be noted for further consideration.

#### **55. Embedding strategic commissioning as business as usual**

(1) Mr Carter moved and Mr Cooke seconded the following motion:

“a) Note the changes being made to the business planning arrangements which will require directorates to better identify the pipeline of future strategic commissioning decisions.

b) Agree to reform executive member governance arrangements so that it better fits the strategic commissioning cycle, including:

i) The creation of a Strategic Commissioning Board through the merger of the existing Transformation Advisory Group (TAG) and the Procurement Board (PB).

ii) The creation of a Budget & Performance Board through the merger of existing Budget Programme Board (BPB) and the existing Performance & Evaluation Board (PEB).

c) Agree to the continuation of the Commissioning Advisory Board (CAB) as a vehicle for non-executive member engagement on strategic commissioning for a further 12 month period

d) Note the need for Cabinet Committees operating arrangements to change to ensure their role in the strategic commissioning cycle is secured and effective, and the engagement with Chairman of Cabinet Committee to consider options

e) Note the work undertaken and ongoing to ensure that there are clear roles, responsibilities and accountability to support strategic commissioning approach through:

i) Better demarcating those officers with accountability for strategic commissioning of services and those responsible for the operational delivery of KCC services.

ii) Ensuring that opportunities for joint / integrated commissioning and service design with partners are optimised.”

(2) The motion was agreed without a formal vote.

- (3) RESOLVED that:
- a) the changes being made to the business planning arrangements which will require directorates to better identify the pipeline of future strategic commissioning decisions be noted.
  - b) the reform of executive member governance arrangements to better fit the strategic commissioning cycle be agreed, including:
    - i) the creation of a Strategic Commissioning Board through the merger of the existing Transformation Advisory Group (TAG) and the Procurement Board (PB).
    - ii) the creation of a Budget & Performance Board through the merger of existing Budget Programme Board (BPB) and the existing Performance & Evaluation Board (PEB).
  - c) the continuation of the Commissioning Advisory Board (CAB) as a vehicle for non-executive member engagement on strategic commissioning for a further 12 month period be agreed
  - d) the need for Cabinet Committees operating arrangements to change to ensure their role in the strategic commissioning cycle is secured and effective, and the engagement with Chairmen of Cabinet Committees to consider options be noted
  - e) the work undertaken be noted and ongoing to ensure that there are clear roles, responsibilities and accountability to support strategic commissioning approach through
    - i) better demarcating those officers with accountability for strategic commissioning of services and those responsible for the operational delivery of KCC services.
    - ii) ensuring that opportunities for joint / integrated commissioning and service design with partners are optimised.

## 56. Motion for Time Limited Debate

### *Retaining and recruiting GPs*

- (1) Dr Eddy moved and Ms Harrison seconded the following motion:

"This Council is increasingly concerned by the problem of retaining and recruiting GPs in Kent and calls on Government to address the situation as a matter of urgency by:

1. Improving funding to practices which are prepared to accept for retraining those GPs returning to practise after absence for childcare or work overseas;
2. Reducing the burdens of bureaucracy on GPs; and
3. Increasing the opportunities for training practice nurses to support GPs."

- (2) Mr Gough moved and Mr Gibbens seconded the following amendment:

"This Council is increasingly concerned by the problem of retaining and recruiting GPs in Kent and calls on Government to **support the work underway in Kent** to address the situation as a matter of urgency, **and to ensure best use of resources across the sector** by:

1. Improving **support** to practices which are prepared to accept for retraining those GPs returning to practise after absence for childcare or work overseas;

2. Reducing the burdens of bureaucracy on GPs, **and others across health and social care;**
3. Increasing the opportunities for training practice nurses to support GPs; **and**
- 4. Supporting Kent in reforming primary care so it is a sector of health and care that GPs and other staff groups wish to work in and which could be used as a model for elsewhere in the NHS .”**

(3) Dr Eddy, with the agreement of his seconder, incorporated the amendment into his motion.

(4) The motion, as amended, was agreed without a formal vote.

(5) RESOLVED that this Council is increasingly concerned by the problem of retaining and recruiting GPs in Kent and calls on Government to support the work underway in Kent to address the situation as a matter of urgency and to ensure best use of resources across the sector by:

1. Improving support to practices which are prepared to accept for retraining those GPs returning to practise after absence for childcare or work overseas;
2. Reducing the burdens of bureaucracy on GPs, and others across health and social care;
3. Increasing the opportunities for training practice nurses to support GPs; and
4. Supporting Kent in reforming primary care so it is a sector of health and care that GPs and other staff groups wish to work in and which could be used as a model for elsewhere in the NHS.