

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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### CABINET

MINUTES of a meeting of the Cabinet held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Monday, 18 May 2009.

PRESENT: Mr P B Carter (Chairman), Mr N J D Chard, Mr M C Dance, Mr K A Ferrin, MBE, Mr G K Gibbens, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr A J King, MBE, Mr K G Lynes, Mr R A Marsh and Mr L B Ridings

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr P Gilroy (Chief Executive), Mr M Austerberry (Executive Director, Environment, Highways and Waste), Mr D Cockburn (Executive Director, Strategy, Economic Development & ICT), Ms A Honey (Managing Director Communities), Mr O Mills (Managing Director - Adult Social Services), Ms M Peachey (Kent Director Of Public Health), Ms R Turner (Managing Director Children, Families and Education), Mr A Wood (Head of Financial Management) and Mr G Mills (Democratic Services Manager (Executive))

### UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

#### 1. Statement by Mr Kevin Lynes

Mr Lynes said that he had undertaken work as a Peer Review Member for the Audit Commission in excess of two years ago and had not appreciated that that could in fact amount to an interest which should have been declared in relation to two reports considered at the Cabinet meeting held on 20 April 2009. These matters were the report on the Annual Audit and Inspection letter and the Corporate Assessment Performance Improvement Plan. He therefore placed on record his apologies for this inadvertent omission.

#### 2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 April 2009

*(Item. 2)*

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2009 were agreed and signed as a true record.

#### 3. Revenue & Capital Budget Monitoring Exception Report

*(Item. 3 - report by Mr Nick Chard, Cabinet Member for Finance and Lynda McMullan, Director of Finance)*

(1) This exception report highlighted the main movements since the report to Cabinet at its meeting on 20 April 2009 and was based on the March monitoring returns. Mr Chard said that the forecast under spend was now at some £6m. Slippage on the Capital Budget was improving and more schemes were being brought forward than in previous years. However, although the slippage was now being contained the situation would continue to be closely monitored. Mr Chard also reported that the Treasury Advisory Group had now held its first meeting and that Minutes of the Group would be sent to the Governance and Audit Committee and the Budget IMG for discussion. Mr Chard also said that through good Treasury

Management and, most significantly, a restructure of existing debt a net saving of some £13m would be delivered over the next four years.

(2) Mr Wood said that the County Council had been advised by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) that it was likely to get over 90% of its total deposits in Icelandic banks returned. The Institute had also advised local authorities how they should account for their deposits in Icelandic banks in their annual accounts.

(3) Mr Carter said that the County Council continued to have a complex and ambitious Capital Programme and said that its timetabling and delivery in part depended on taking into account planning and other legal and formal procedures that had to be followed before building projects could commence. He said that the County Council continued to work with the Home Office to recover all its costs related to asylum and he looked forward to finally being able to bring this matter to a satisfactory conclusion.

(4) Cabinet then noted the latest forecast revenue and capital budget monitoring position for 2008/09 and endorsed the establishment of a Treasury Advisory Group as detailed in paragraph 2.5 of the report.

#### **4. Frost Damage - January to March 2009 - Feedback**

*(Item. 4 - report by Mr Keith Ferrin, Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste and Caroline Bruce, Interim Director – Kent Highways Services)*

*(Mr Kim Hills, Head of Community Operations – KHS was present for this item)*

(1) This report detailed the significant resources targeted at tackling the problems of pot holes which the County Council had put in place following both the winter of 2008 and the winter of 2009. Funding for repairing potholes and undertaking minor surface repairs had increased significantly with some £1.8m being provided for the funding of eighteen major patching crews from late summer throughout the rest of 2008/09 and a further £500,000 being made available following the winter of 2009 which provided funding for an additional fifteen crews until the end of March. Also, in response to the February snow a further ten crews were provided to tackle the additional potholes and carriageway patching required and in late February and throughout March there was a total of 66 crews working on minor and major surface repairs across the county.

(2) The experiences over the last two winters had shown that by providing the correct resources, at the correct time and targeting them in the areas of need, significant productivity could be achieved. In addition a good level of public response/satisfaction was possible and even before the bad weather public satisfaction with roads in Kent had risen by some 10%. However, the Council was not being complacent and for 2009/10 the budget provision to the “front end” of this service had been increased further to allow minor resurfacing to be undertaken to the value of £1m and major resurfacing to be undertaken to the value of some £1.5m.

(3) During the course of discussion Members of Cabinet said that they welcomed this report and the positive actions which had been taken in order to improve the response time to undertaking repairs to potholes and minor surface repairs.

(4) Cabinet then noted the report.

**5. Decisions from Cabinet Scrutiny Committee - 29 April 2009**

*(Item. 5 - report by Mr Alex King, Deputy Leader and Mr Peter Sass, Head of Democratic Services & Local Leadership)*

RESOLVED that the report and the Cabinet Member responses be noted as appropriate.