

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Kent County Council held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 19 May 2016.

PRESENT:

Mr T Gates (Chairman)
Mr D L Brazier (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 N J Bond, Mr A H T Bowles, Mrs P Brivio, 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, 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, Mr P M Harman, 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, 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 S C Manion, 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 W Scobie, Mr T L Shonk, Mr C Simkins, Mr J D Simmonds, MBE, 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, 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: Mr D Cockburn (Corporate Director Strategic & Corporate Services), Mr G Wild (Director of Governance and Law) and Mr P Sass (Head of Democratic Services)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Election of Chairman

(Mr M J Harrison the present Chairman presided for this item)

(1) Mr P B Carter, CBE moved and Mr A H T Bowles seconded that:

Mr T Gates be appointed Chairman of the County Council.

Agreed unanimously

(2) Thereupon Mr Gates took the chair, made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and returned thanks for his election.

(3) Mr Carter paid tribute to Mr Harrison and thanked him for the manner in which he had carried out his duties as Chairman of the Council from May 2015 to the present day.

- (4) Mr Harrison suitably replied.

2. Election of Vice-Chairman

- (1) Mr R W Gough moved, Mrs P A V Stockell seconded that Mr D L Brazier be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Council.

Agreed unanimously

- (2) Mr Brazier thereupon made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and returned thanks for his appointment.

3. Apologies for Absence

The Director of Governance and Law reported apologies from Ms Cribbon and Mr McKenna.

4. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Significant Interests in items on the agenda

None

5. Minutes of the meetings held on 24 March 2016 and, if in order, to be approved as a correct record

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 24 March 2016 be approved as a correct record.

6. Chairman's Announcements

(a) Mr Keith Ferrin, MBE

- (1) The Chairman stated that it was with regret that he had to inform Members of the death of Mr Keith Ferrin, on 15 April 2016, former Conservative Member for Gillingham from 1977 – 1997 and Swale West from 1997- 2013. During his time with KCC he served on a wide range of formal bodies including the Economic Development Cabinet Committee, Governance and Audit Committee, Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Electoral & Boundary Review Committee, Social Care and Public Health Cabinet Committee and the Standards Committee.

- (2) Following the introduction of a Cabinet model of governance Mr Ferrin held the role of lead Member for Finance and was the Cabinet Member for a period of time for the portfolios, which covered Adult Social Care, Environment, Highways and Waste.

- (3) Mr Ferrin's funeral had taken place on Monday 9 May 2016

- (4) Mr King, Mr Marsh, Mr Carter, Mr Bowles, Mr Kite, Mr Parry, Mrs Whittle, Mr Baldock, Mr Truelove and Mrs Dean paid tribute to Mr Ferrin

(b) Major Terence Holden

- (5) The Chairman stated that it was with regret that he had to inform Members of the death of Major Terence Holden, on Friday 8 April, former Conservative Member

for Swale West from 1981 to 1993. During his time with KCC he served on Environment, Planning & Transportation Committee and Planning Sub-Committee.

(6) Major Holden's funeral had taken place on Friday 22 April 2016.

(7) Mr Holden, Mrs Dean and Mr Baldock paid tribute to Major Holden

(c) Mr Reg Hansell

(8) The Chairman stated that it was with regret that he had to inform Members of the death of Mr Reg Hansell, on 18 March 2016, former Labour Member for Dover Rural from 1997 to 2005. During his time with KCC he served on the Education and Libraries Committee, Case Sub-Committee (Shadow Chairman), Early Years & Childcare Joint Board, Policy & Resources Committee: Monitoring and Review Sub-Committee and Children with Special Needs Scrutiny Panel.

(9) Mr Hansell's funeral had taken place on 5 April 2016.

(10) Mr Cowan, Mr Manion and Mrs Dean paid tribute to Mr Hansell.

(11) At the end of the tributes all Members stood in silence in memory of Mr Ferrin, Major Holden and Mr Hansell.

(12) After the one minute silence the Chairman moved, the Vice-Chairman seconded and it was resolved unanimously that:

(13) This Council records the sense of loss it feels on the sad passing of Mr Ferrin, Major Holden and Mr Hansell and extends to their families and friends our heartfelt sympathy to them in their sad bereavements.

(d) Winners of The Queen's Award for Enterprise 2016

(14) The Chairman stated that he was delighted to announce that Kent had 3 winners of The Queen's Award for Enterprise 2016. They were, Polypipe Limited, Aylesford, AXA PPP International, Tunbridge Wells and Ecoegg Ltd, Maidstone.

7. Questions

In accordance with Procedure Rule 1.17(4), 9 questions were asked and replies given. A record of all questions put and answers given at the meeting are available [online](#) with the papers for this meeting. Questions 10 to 11 were not put in the time available but written answers were provided.

8. Report by Leader of the Council (Oral)

(1) The Leader updated the Council on events since the previous meeting.

(2) Mr Carter referred to the additional funding for a road repair blitz, the white paper *Education Excellence Everywhere*, the local government funding review, next year's budget, devolution, the apprenticeship levy and health and social care integration.

(3) In relation to the proposed road repair blitz, Mr Carter announced that £4m was being allocated and works would start in mid-June. This was as a result of £1.4 million from government, £1.5 million planned KCC expenditure on road repair and pot holes, and £1.1 million from additional funding identified by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement. He stated that Members would receive further details of these works before they commenced. The vast majority of these works would be carried out by small and medium sized civil engineering companies on a district by district basis.

(4) Mr Carter referred to the white paper, *Education Excellence Everywhere* and the small victory in the removal of the enforced academisation from the potential education bill referred to in the Queen's speech. He stated that it was now necessary to find a way forward that made sure that there was not a two-tier education and financial system that favoured multi-academy trusts but penalised community schools. Regarding local government sponsored multi-academy trusts, it was necessary to look at what these would look like and the pros and cons in order to achieve a fairer balance between schools through the new national funding formula. There was a need to ensure that the education support grant allowed KCC to continue to provide school improvement and support services to the nearly 400 schools that still remained in the community schools category.

(5) Regarding the local government funding review, Mr Carter mentioned that DCLG officials were working very closely with the LGA and the County Councils Network (CCN). The Corporate Director of Finance and Procurement and the Head of Financial Strategy were part of one of the significant working groups. The aim was to ensure that the methodology used was transparent and led to a new needs-led, fair funding review as 100% commercial rate retention was introduced across the country.

(6) In relation to next year's budgetary problems, Mr Carter referred to the unidentified savings of some £50 million. Good progress was being made and he suggested that, with the agreement of opposition leaders, there could be a mini budget session at the September County Council meeting. If at the September meeting additional savings were agreed these could potentially start to be taken in year, rather than waiting until February 2017 to identify the savings.

(7) Mr Carter stated that at the July County Council meeting there might be an item on devolution to update Members on negotiations with the District and Medway colleagues on a Kent and Medway devolution submission to government. He referred to a very good facilitated discussion with all district leaders and Medway earlier that week, which suggested that there was agreement to progress what hopefully would be an ambitious devolution submission to government before the summer recess. He expressed the view that it was now time that County Council Members were fully involved in that debate and received a progress report on the submission. He explained that there was an acceptance by district leaders that, in Kent and Medway, we did not want the imposition of a directly elected mayor. This view accorded with the vast majority of County Councils.

(8) Mr Carter informed Members that at the next meeting of the Personnel Committee there would be a paper on the apprenticeship levy. The County Council would have to contribute £4.5 million into the levy and the Personnel Committee would consider how this could be used to ensure that there was a significant increase

in the number of Kent County Council apprenticeships, including those in KCC's supply chain. This year Kent would have 3000 16-18 year olds in modern apprenticeships which was one of the highest in the country.

(9) In relation to the sustainable transformation plan for health and social care integration, which was due to be submitted on 26 June 2016, Mr Carter stated that he had met with Mr Douglas, the chief executive of Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells Hospital Trust, who was leading this submission on behalf of Kent and Medway. If a good, ambitious, well-constructed, sustainable transformation plan was submitted then there was the potential to receive hundreds of millions of pounds. It was therefore important for health partners and social care to work closely together on community health and preventative services that reduce hospitalisation and get people out of hospital into step-down care and back behind their own front door as fast as possible.

(10) Mr Latchford, the Leader of the Opposition, welcomed the governments "u-turn" on acadamisisation and referred to the total cross party County Council support on this issue. He acknowledged the work by the Leader, in his capacity as Leader of the County Councils Network which demonstrated that Kent was able to use its influence in central government; he hoped that the same would be the case for operation stack.

(11) Mr Latchford referred to the excellent news from the Leader on the road repair blitz.

(12) In reference to apprenticeships, Mr Latchford referred to a time when an apprenticeship was the key to a career in that industry. He acknowledged KCC's good record of apprenticeships, but was disappointed that the new guidelines did not appear make any reference to post apprenticeship employment. He referred to the situation of his grandson, who lived in the north east of England, and on completion of his apprenticeship had had his employment terminated and a new batch of apprentices taken on. He was now on job seekers allowance in an area bereft of opportunity.

(13) Mr Latchford referred to 'Financial Times' research in February 2016 which showed that 30% of those who started an apprenticeship failed to complete it. He stated that the CBI had raised concerns, as had businesses, about the design and implementation of the levy, which passed the cost of the government's apprenticeship scheme from the taxpayer to employers. He expressed support for apprenticeship schemes, but stated that the apprenticeship levy must not be another target led initiative but one that was truly aimed at giving the younger generation an opportunity to learn skills and enhance employability opportunities so desperately needed in this country.

(14) Mr Latchford expressed disappointment that the Leader had not commented on the additional 20% cost of the young persons' travel pass, which had become an unacceptable burden to families and was an issue that was still worthy of reconsideration.

(15) Mr Latchford referred to the current devolution issue and the general unease at the way in which central government appeared to be driving policies, without listening to the second tier authorities. He mentioned that Cambridge business

leaders had referred to the “very ill-founded devolution plan with Suffolk and Norfolk”. In addition he stated that the west of England also opposed a metro mayor devolution bill for their area. Whilst he accepted that the devolution principle had merit and could be an opportunity to improve the lives of those in our county, he hoped, however, that the devolution agenda would enable local authorities to have the ability to decide their own priorities and have more control on how services were carried out. He confirmed his opposition to any devolution deal that involved the imposition of a unitary council instead of the current two-tier system of local government. He was pleased that devolution would be on the agenda for the next council meeting.

(16) Mr Latchford stated that his group looked forward to taking part in the mini budget session at the September County Council meeting.

(17) Mr Cowan, Leader of the Labour Group, referred to academisation and welcomed the recent U-turn the government had made and acknowledged the part played by both Mr Carter and Mr Gough and all members of this council who had united together to protect KCC’s schools. He had no doubt that the government would continue to pursue the goal of complete centralisation of state education. He referred to the government’s statement that all schools would be made to convert in cases where the local authority could no longer viably support its remaining schools. He stated that this issue had not gone away and as a council KCC must continue to fight to defend state education. He also referred to the need to defend the position of parent governors. He confirmed that his group did not support academisation even at its current level as it simply reduced local accountability, local democracy and fairness.

(18) In reference to the apprenticeship programme, Mr Cowan confirmed that the Labour group fully supported all apprenticeship schemes. He made reference to his group’s unsuccessful budget amendment to include an extra £0.5 million for youngsters with learning needs which would have created a further 250 apprenticeships. Whilst welcoming the progress in apprenticeship schemes, he emphasised the importance of monitoring whether the programmes met the widest possible range of employment sectors and were gender balanced.

(19) Regarding devolution, Mr Cowan stated that the government proposals were in a state of confusion as far as the city regions were concerned. There was some logic in attempting to restore elements of the two-tier system established by Sir Keith Joseph in the 1974 reforms, however city mayors currently proposed were a pale shadow of what Sir Keith Joseph had set up, only London had a proper two-tiered system. He referred to devolution for counties and the one clear message coming from the government was that county councils were too small for what they envisage; it must be groupings of county councils within a region. This would lead to three tiers of government if there must be a regional directly elected mayor. This would unnecessarily add to the complexity of local government.

(20) Mr Cowan made reference to the talk of district councils merging in parts of Kent and that Councillor Watkins at Dover District Council was expecting an announcement at the 23 July, district council meeting in anticipation of a different submission. He stated that currently central government was continuing with a mayoral combined authority model in county areas and indications were that county deals would still only be agreed on this basis.

(21) Mrs Dean, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, referred to acadamisation and disagreed that this was a u-turn, she considered it to be a slow down. She reminded Members of what had happened over the acadamisation programme, first of all the poorly performing schools were forced to academise, then the best performing schools were forced to academise, then the coasting schools were forced to academise and now the worst performing local authorities were going to have to academise their schools. She predicted that the worst performing authorities would be all those except the best one because government were removing 81% of the education support grant to local authorities under the assumption that by 2022 all schools would have been academised. In relation to parent governors Mrs Dean referred to the lack of clarity over government proposals. Mrs Dean stated that she was looking forward to discussion on the proposals for local government academy trusts.

(22) In relation to devolution, Mrs Dean stated that she was encouraged to hear that there was Kent and Medway agreement on a devolution proposal that might be going forward in the summer. She emphasised the importance of the public being made aware of what devolution would mean to them in respect of the delivery of services and their council tax bill. She sought an assurance that a process of public awareness would be carried out before there was a submission to government.

(23) Mrs Dean referred to devolution to some extent depending upon local authorities in the county knowing that KCC was on their side. Mrs Dean asked the leader in his reply to update the Council on the current position regarding funding for flood defence works at Yalding village.

(24) Mrs Dean agreed with the Leader's suggested mini-budget at the September County Council meeting.

(23) Mr Whybrow, Leader of the Independents Group, referred to academisation and devolution and stated that he considered the situation to be shambolic. He referred to a time when central government would actually weigh up the advantages and disadvantages, talk to those people affected, talk and listen to experts before actually announcing policy, this no longer seemed to be the case.

(25) Regarding academisation, Mr Whybrow agreed with Mrs Dean that the government still had the same aspiration. He expressed the view that this government held local government in disdain when it came to controlling education and that they were still heading in the same direction albeit a little more slowly. The government did not seem to be taking into account the logistics or actually what was best for young people. He did not consider that academisation would address the majority of issues facing education in this country. In addition he gave the example of an Ofsted rated 'good' primary school in Hythe which had been contacted by two separate academy trusts regarding converting.

(26) In relation to devolution, Mr Whybrow referred to it coming apart in places like East Anglia. It was hugely distracting at a time of major challenge for local government and had set council against council in a unedifying power grab. He was not convinced that there was a lot on the table for local government in terms of significant new fiscal or decision making autonomy.

(27) In replying to the other Leaders' comments, on academisation, Mr Carter, considered this to be a minor victory and agreed with Mrs Dean that this was not a u-turn. He agreed that community schools could be disadvantaged by not having the same access to support funding as academy trusts which was why the concept of local government academy trusts might be a way forward. He stated that it was important to ensure that services that were highly valued by schools such as HR, school finance and ICT, were available to all schools whether multi-academy trusts or community schools. There was a need to make sure that those traded services were grown and supported.

(28) Regarding devolution, skills funding, post 16 skills funding would be a major issue and was a common theme amongst all districts and Medway. The current system did not actually meet the needs of business and in many cases the aspirations of young people. There was the opportunity to do something very different in Kent and Medway and to include this in our devolution submission. On the question of public consultation on devolution, Mr Carter explained that this was necessary and noted that the public consultation issue in Lincolnshire appeared to be the stumbling block. It was of utmost importance that the test for Kent should be is it going to be effective and efficient in supporting the residents of Kent and the young people and businesses in Kent?

(29) Mr Carter stated that he understood that East Kent at district level to combine all of the districts into one super district authority. This was very different from the debates that were being held with government on freedom and flexibilities and more money to get power out of Whitehall and closer to the people in Kent.

(30) In response to the reference made to the young person's travel pass. Mr Carter stated that this was the most generously supported school transport system in this country outside of London. This authority had chosen to fund an additional £8 million to help parents get their young people to and from school. Despite the state of the public finances of this country and the considerable part local government was having to play to restore those public finances, he was still hoping to maintain the freedom pass at an affordable cost to parents.

(31) In reply to Mrs Dean's question on flood measures in Yalding, Mr Carter referred to a recent meeting with the environment agency, Maidstone Borough Council, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council and Yalding Parish Council. KCC had made £4 million available for these works and asked Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council and Maidstone Borough Council to supplement this. He stated that the public sector must come together to help support the flood defences. The range of schemes for investment probably went up to a total of some £60 million for environment agency flood amelioration schemes. KCC could not invest in all of these schemes but was putting in a local growth fund submission for another £5 - £6 million. If KCC was successful in this bid some further flood defences could be carried out to help protect that area of the county. Mr Carter confirmed that his promise to the people of Yalding was to make sure KCC's money helped support Yalding alongside contributions from others as well. KCC would do its bit but it was up to others to help and support funding for the most effective environment agency designed schemes.

9. Members' Allowances Scheme – 2016/17

- (1) The Chairman moved and the Vice-Chairman seconded the following motion:

“The County Council is recommended to adopt the Members' Allowances Scheme for the period 1 June 2016 to 4 May 2017 as set out in the Appendix to this report.”

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

- (3) RESOLVED that the Members' Allowances Scheme for the period 1 June 2016 to 4 May 2017, as set out in the Appendix to the report, be adopted.

10. Updated Financial Regulations

- (1) Mr Simmonds moved and Miss Carey seconded the following recommendation:

“Members are asked to consider and approve the updated Financial Regulations and Delegated Authority Matrix of Approval Limits.”

- (2) In proposing the motion Mr Simmonds referred to the need to amend paragraph 2.13 (i) of the Financial Regulations by the reinstatement of the words “and other significant risks”

- (3) Members raised points of clarification which Mr Simmonds stated would be addressed by officers. Members also drew attention to typographical errors in the Financial Regulations for, example the numbering of paragraph A24/25, which would be addressed in the final version.

- (4) Following the debate the Chairman put the amendment set out in paragraph (1) above to the vote and the votes cast were as follows:

For (51)

Mrs A Allen, Mr M Angell, Mr M Balfour, Mr D Brazier, Mrs P Brivio, Mr C Caller, Miss S Carey, Mr P Carter, Mrs P Cole, Mr G Cooke, Mr G Cowan, Mrs M Crabtree, Mr A Crowther, Mrs V Dagger, Mr M Dance, Dr M Eddy, Mr G Gibbens, Mr R Gough, Ms A Harrison, Mr M Harrison, Mr M Hill, Mrs S Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mr P Homewood, Mr E Hotson, Ms S Howes, Mr A King, Mr J Kite, Mr R Long, Mr G Lymer, Mr T Maddison, Mr S Manion, Mr M Northey, Mr P Oakford, Mr J Ozog, Mr R Parry, Mr C Pearman, Mr L Ridings, Mrs E Rowbotham, Mr W Scobie, Mr C Simkins, Mr J Simmonds, Mr C Smith, Mr D Smyth, Mrs P Stockell, Mr B Sweetland, Mr N Thandi, Mrs C Waters, Mr J Wedgbury, Mr A Wickham, Mrs Z Wiltshire.

Against (19)

Mr M Baldock, Mr R Bird, Mr H Birkby, Mr N Bond, Mr L Burgess, Mr B Clark, Mr D Daley, Mrs T Dean, Mr P Harman, Mr M Heale, Mr C Hoare, Mr G Koowaree, Mr R Latchford, Mr B MacDowall, Mr B Neaves, Mr T Shonk, Mr A Terry, Mr M Vye, Mr M Whybrow.

Abstain (6)

Mr A Bowles, Mr J Davies, Mr J Elenor, Mrs M Elenor, Mr A Marsh, Mr J Scholes.

Motion carried

(5) RESOLVED that the updated Financial Regulations and Delegated Authority Matrix of Approval Limits, with the amendment of paragraph 2.13(i) and typographic errors, be approved.

11. Request for Extended Leave of Absence

(1) The Chairman moved and the Vice-Chairman seconded the following motion:

“In accordance with Section 85 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 the County Council is asked to agree Ms Cribbon’s request for extended leave for a six month period expiring on Thursday 8 December 2016 on the grounds of serious ill health.”

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

(3) RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 85 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 Ms Cribbon’s request for extended leave for a six month period expiring on Thursday 8 December 2016 on the grounds of serious ill health be approved.

12. Select Committee - Energy Security

(1) Mr Balfour moved and Mr Dance seconded the following motion:

“(a) The Select Committee be thanked for its work and for producing a relevant and balanced document.

(b) The witnesses and others who provided evidence and made valuable contributions to the Select Committee be thanked.

(c) County Council’s comments on the report be noted and the report endorsed.”

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

(3) RESOLVED that the Select Committee be thanked for its work and for producing a relevant and well balanced document, the witnesses and others who provided evidence and made a valuable contribution to the Select Committee be thanked and the comments made by Members be noted and the report be endorsed.

13. Motions for Time Limited Debate

(a) Compulsory Academisation of schools

(1). Mr Vye proposed and Mr Bird seconded the following motion:

“This Council welcomes the Government's decision to withdraw the proposed compulsory academisation of schools, a proposition which has been widely condemned by school staff, parents and councillors in Kent.

This council recognises the hard work and dedication of school staff in raising educational standards across the county and the vital role of parent governors in supporting schools management and also making schools locally accountable.

This council is determined to provide all children in Kent with a good education and reaffirms its commitment to supporting schools through the county council's Schools Improvement unit.”

(2). Mr Cowan moved and Mr Caller seconded the following amendment:

- In the first sentence after the word “academisation of schools” add “ by 2020/22”.
- At the end of the first paragraph add “However, it is recognised that the danger of all of Kent’s schools becoming academies has not disappeared as a result of this proposal.”
- In the last paragraph after the words “This Council is” add “ also”

(3) Mr Gough suggested a minor amendment to the amended wording proposed. Mr Cowan, with the agreement of his seconder, amended the wording of the amendment in bullet point 2 above to read:

- At the end of the first paragraph add “However, it is recognised that the danger of **the policy being pursued by other means** ~~all of Kent’s schools becoming academies~~ has not disappeared as a result of this proposal.”

(3). Mr Vye, with the agreement of his seconder, incorporated the revised amendment into his motion.

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

(5). RESOLVED that this Council welcomes the Government's decision to withdraw the proposed compulsory academisation of schools by 2020/22, a proposition which has been widely condemned by school staff, parents and councillors in Kent. However, it is recognised that the danger of the policy being pursued by other means has not disappeared as a result of this proposal.

This council recognises the hard work and dedication of school staff in raising educational standards across the county and the vital role of parent governors in supporting schools management and also making schools locally accountable.

This Council is also determined to provide all children in Kent with a good education and reaffirms its commitment to supporting schools through the county council's Schools Improvement unit.

(b) KCC Headquarters – security and public access

(6). Mr Heale moved and Mr Latchford seconded the following motion:

"This Council believes it is time to review the levels of security and public access to KCC Headquarters at County Hall in the interests of greater safety for both KCC officers and members and requests the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services to initiate this review."

(7). Ms Harrison moved and Mrs Brivio seconded the following amendment:

- Delete the words "time to review the levels" and add in their place "appropriate to introduce regular reviews".
- In the first sentence after "public access to" insert the words "the whole" and after "KCC" delete "Headquarters at County Hall" and insert "Estate".
- After the words "greater safety" delete "for both" and add "of the public and".
- Between the words "requests" and "the Cabinet Member" insert "that".
- After "Democratic Services delete "to" and at the end of the motion insert the word "programme."

(8). Mr Heale, with the agreement of his seconder, incorporated the amendment into his motion.

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

(10). RESOLVED that this Council believes that it is appropriate to introduce regular reviews of security and public access to the whole KCC Estate in the interests of greater safety of the public and KCC officers and members and requests the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services to initiate this review programme.

(c) School and community energy schemes

(11) Mr Wedgbury moved and Mr Parry seconded the following motion:

"KCC asks the Chairman of the Council to contact the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change to ask her to consider supporting Community and Schools energy projects through targeted financial help. In particular we ask the Secretary of State to look again at the support available for community renewable energy schemes including the discontinuation of tax relief (SITR) for community energy schemes and the absence of a higher specific FIT tariff to encourage the deployment of school and community energy schemes. We believe targeted support will provide a number of important environmental and social benefits as well as reducing energy bills. It would also enable community buildings to play a role in developing local energy economies and continue to provide much needed local services by utilising the income generation from renewable energy."

(12) The motion was agreed unanimously without a formal vote.

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(13) RESOLVED that the Chairman of the Council contact the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change to request her to consider supporting Community and Schools energy projects through targeted financial help. In particular the Secretary of State be asked to look again at the support available for community renewable energy schemes including the discontinuation of tax relief (SITR) for community energy schemes and the absence of a higher specific FIT tariff to encourage the deployment of school and community energy schemes. Kent County Council believes targeted support will provide a number of important environmental and social benefits as well as reducing energy bills. It would also enable community buildings to play a role in developing local energy economies and continue to provide much needed local services by utilising the income generation from renewable energy.