

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

GROWTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITIES CABINET COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Growth Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 22 March 2017.

PRESENT: Mr M A Wickham (Chairman), Mr S Holden (Vice-Chairman), Mrs A D Allen, MBE (Substitute for Vacancy), Mr N J Bond (Substitute for Mr M Baldock), Mr A H T Bowles, Mr D L Brazier, Mr B E Clark, Mr J A Kite, MBE, Mr G Lymer, Mrs E D Rowbotham, Mr C Simkins and Mr R Truelove

ALSO PRESENT: Mr M C Dance and Mr P M Hill, OBE

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs B Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport) and Mrs A Hunter (Principal Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

210. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item A2)

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Baldock and Mr McKenna. Mr Bond and Mrs Allen attended as substitutes for Mr Baldock and the vacancy respectively.

211. Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda

(Item A3)

There were no declarations of interest.

212. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2017

(Item A4)

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2017 are a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

213. Presentation - Promoting Kent Food and Drink Exports

(Item A5)

- (1) Steve Samson (Trade Development Manager) and Stephanie Durling (Manager – Produced in Kent) gave a presentation which is available online as an appendix to these minutes.
- (2) In response to Members' questions and comments, officers said that EU funding was in place for the next 2.5 years and efforts to minimise the impact of Brexit on Kent business included maintaining links with the various chambers of commerce and the food and drink sector networks as well as continuing to work with the Department of International Trade and identifying other sources of funding to replace EU funds. Officers also said that both

large and small companies were supported to expand by developing export markets.

- (3) Resolved that the presentation be noted.

214. Verbal updates by Cabinet Members and Corporate Director

(Item A6)

- (1) Mr Dance (Cabinet Member for Economic Development) gave a verbal update. He said that Made in Kent had recently been launched with a view to helping public and private sector organisations and business to access funding held by government from the Apprenticeship Levy to re-train staff and create apprenticeships in Kent.
- (2) Mr Dance said the Kent Sales Academy, which was a partnership with Hadlow College and a social organisation was about to be launched with a view to helping small companies to increase their gross value added.
- (3) Mr Hill (Cabinet Member for Community Services) said the libraries in Snodland and Dartford had recently re-opened and Meopham Library was currently undergoing a refurbishment.
- (4) Mr Hill also said that the third voluntary sector conference had been held in Faversham on 28 February. The event had been attended by 100 people representing 87 organisations and the feedback had been very positive.
- (5) Resolved that the verbal updates be noted.

215. 16/00148 A2 Bean and Ebbsfleet Junction Improvement - funding contribution by the Strategic Transport Infrastructure Programme (STIP)

(Item B1)

- (1) Andrew Moreton (Project Manager HT&W) introduced the report which asked the Cabinet Committee to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development on a proposed decision to approve the full and final contribution from the Strategic Transport Infrastructure Programme (STIP) towards the A2 Bean and Ebbsfleet junction improvements and to support the approach that KCC would not forward fund or guarantee the proposed contribution.
- (2) Mr Moreton said that although the project was being funded by Highways England there was a requirement for the STIP fund to make a contribution. He also said that STIP Members had discussed three options which were set out in paragraph 4.2 of the report before deciding on option 2.
- (3) Resolved that the Cabinet Committee endorsed the proposed decision of the Cabinet Member for Economic Development to:
 - a) Approve the full and final contribution from the Strategic Transport Infrastructure Programme (STIP) towards the A2 Bean and Ebbsfleet junction improvements;

- b) Support the approach that KCC will not forward fund or guarantee the proposed contribution.

216. 17/00017 Dartford Town Centre transport improvements and public realm works - Approval to enter in to a Legal Agreement

(Item B2)

- (1) Andy Moreton (Project Manager HT&W) introduced the report which asked the Cabinet Committee to consider and endorse, or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development on the proposed decision to delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport and the Corporate Director Finance and Procurement to negotiate and execute legal and/or partnership agreements for the delivery of the Dartford Town Centre scheme.
- (2) Mr Moreton said a scheme of work within Dartford Town Centre had been included in the Kent Thameside Strategic Infrastructure Programme. A project like this would ordinarily be managed by the Major Projects Team within KCC; however Dartford Borough Council had made a request to be the lead authority on the procurement, design and implementation of the agreed works. To make this possible a third party, back to back legal agreement was required between KCC and Dartford Borough Council.
- (3) A question was asked about whether a specific reference to the need for approval of the Homes and Community Agency and the South East Local Economic Partnership should be included in the proposed decision.
- (4) Comments were made about the value of KCC's input to the project, its response to the request by Dartford Borough Council to lead the project and in particular to the invaluable professional advice given by Mr Moreton.
- (5) Resolved that the Cabinet Committee endorse the proposed decision of the Cabinet Member for Economic Development to delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport and the Corporate Director Finance and Procurement to negotiate and execute legal and/or partnership agreements for the delivery of the Dartford Town Centre scheme.

217. 17/00018 KCC Records Management storage reprourement

(Item B3)

- (1) Mr Hill (Cabinet Member for Community Services) introduced the report which asked the Cabinet Committee to consider and endorse the proposed approach or make recommendations on a proposed decision to delegate the award and signing of the contract to KCC officers following completion of the tender evaluation process
- (2) Barbara Bragg (Strategic Manager – Specialist and Support Services) said that the Records Management Service was an internal service managed by Libraries, Registration and Archives in partnership with the KCC Records Manager to ensure that KCC was compliant with the Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on records management issued under section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. She said the current contract, which was worth about

£200,000 a year, was due to expire on 30 July 2017 and it was proposed to let a contract for up to ten years. Ms Bragg also said that the only secure method of retaining some records, particularly for social care relating to looked after children and adopted children, was in a physical format and that they had very long retention periods.

- (3) In response to Members' questions she said: archivists were very aware of documents and other records that needed to be retained because of their historic and other value; the need to retain particular records was reviewed at regular intervals in conjunction with the "owner" of the record; and that during the life of the new contract different approaches, including increasing the use of digital archiving, would be explored.
- (4) Resolved that the Cabinet Committee endorse the proposed decision to delegate the award and signing of the contract to KCC officers following completion of the tender evaluation process.

218. Draft Cultural Strategy

(Item B4)

- (1) Mr Hill (Cabinet Member for Community Services) introduced the report which asked the Cabinet Committee to consider the draft strategy document.
- (2) David Smith (Director of Economic Development) said that the draft Cultural Strategy had been subject to extensive stakeholder consultation during 2016 and that the views of the Cabinet Committee were being sought before the final draft strategy was considered by Council in the summer 2017.
- (3) Tony Witton (Culture and Creative Economy Manager) circulated some copies of the first design draft to enable the Cabinet Committee to see the how the final version would look. He also said the results of the stakeholder consultation had been generally positive with a number of queries about particular aspects of the strategy
- (4) In response to comments and questions, Mr Witton said: the strategy was a high level document and individual cultural activities and projects would be included in its implementation plan; and that the Cultural Transformation Board intended the strategy to set out a vision for the sector that was supported by specific high level outcomes under three actions of "Create, Innovate and Sustain".
- (5) Resolved that the draft strategy document be endorsed.

219. 17/00032 Local Growth Fund, Round Three and SELEP working group schemes

(Item B5)

- (1) Mr Dance (Cabinet Member for Economic Development) introduced the report which set out the projects for which grant funding was being sought, and asked the Cabinet Committee to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member on a proposed decision to accept

grant funding. He also said that KCC had to have a robust project plan in place to deliver the LGF projects in Kent before Essex County Council, as the accountable body for the South East Local Economic Partnership, would agree to transfer funding to KCC for projects.

- (2) Sarah Nurden (KMEP Strategic Programme Manager) outlined the four projects for which the funding was being sought. She said funding from the LGF would be received in quarterly instalments, in advance, subject to the completion of a transport business case for each project and approval by the SELEP Accountability Board
- (3) Resolved that the Cabinet Committee endorse the proposed decision of the Cabinet Member for Economic Development to:
 - (a) Accept Government grant funding of £12.95m capital to deliver the following schemes:
 - Fort Halstead in Sevenoaks (£1.53m)
 - Kent & Medway Engineering, Design, Growth and Enterprise (EDGE) Hub (£6.12m)
 - Leigh Flood Storage Area and East Peckham– Unlocking Growth (£4.636m)
 - SELEP Coastal Communities – Housing Led Economic Regeneration in Cliftonville West/Margate Central (£0.666m);
 - (b) Enter into agreements for the transfer of the Local Growth Fund to the respective delivery organisation for the three schemes; and
 - (c) Delegate to the Director of Economic Development and Director of Environment, Planning and Enforcement the authority to conclude arrangements to secure the recovery of administration costs associated with KCC's management of the grant agreements.

220. Transport Improvements to Support The Open *(Item C9)*

- (1) Mr Hill (Cabinet Member for Community Services) said he welcomed the decision taken by the Royal and Ancient Golf Club in favour of holding The Open Championship at the Royal St George's Golf Course in Sandwich and hoped the Cabinet Committee would also welcome it.
- (2) Stephanie Holt (Head of Countryside, Leisure and Sport) introduced the report. She said the 2011 Open at Sandwich had resulted in £24million of direct spending in Kent and had attracted 180,091 visitors. She said hosting the Open would significantly raise the county's profile as a tourism destination and have a positive economic impact. It was anticipated that visitors would increase for the 2020 Open, and that a significant number would travel by train to Sandwich. Transport improvements costing about £1m were required to accommodate the 12-carriage trains and to improve access from the station to the golf course. A financial contribution of £350,000 had been committed by the East Kent district councils and KCC, the South East Local Enterprise Partnership had agreed, subject to receipt of a robust business case, to

provide another £300,000 using underspends from other projects with the Royal and Ancient providing the balance.

- (3) In response to comments, Ms Holt said that visitors would be encouraged to travel by train and the fact that Sandwich town centre could not cope with more buses had been acknowledged.
- (4) Resolved that:
 - (a) The announcement by the Royal and Ancient Golf Club to host The Open 2020 at Royal St Georges be welcomed; and
 - (b) The work underway to deliver the associated transport improvements at Sandwich Station be noted.

221. Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate Business Plan 2017-18
(Item C1)

- (1) Karla Phillips (Strategic Business Adviser for GET) introduced the report which outlined the draft Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate Business Plan (2017-18) for consideration and comment. She drew particular attention to paragraph 2 of the report which set out the new features in the 2017/18 plans.
- (2) In response to questions, Ms Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport) said that contracts were monitored closely to ensure they were delivered in line with expectations. She also said the Member Highway Grants process was being reviewed and an improved process would be in place from May 2017.
- (3) Resolved that:
 - (a) The final draft Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate Business Plan (2017-18) be endorsed;
 - (b) The intention to publish the final Directorate Business Plan online in April 2017 be noted.

222. Risk Management: Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate
(Item C2)

- (1) Mark Scrivener (Corporate Risk Manager) introduced the report which set out the strategic risks relating to the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee in addition to two risks on the Corporate Risk Register for which the Corporate Director was the designated "Risk Owner".
- (2) In response to questions, officers said that risks and actions to mitigate the risks were reviewed on a quarterly basis.
- (3) Resolved that the directorate risk register and relevant corporate risks outlined in appendices 1 and 2 of the report be noted.

223. Impact of 2017 Business Rate Revaluation and Small Business

(Item C3)

- (1) Dave Shipton (Head of Financial Strategy) introduced the report which set out the background to the 2017 revaluation, the impact of the revaluation on Kent properties compared to South East and to the rest of England. It also provided further information on the transitional arrangements announced in the 2016 Autumn Budget Statement and Local Government Finance settlement to support the implementation of the revaluation, and the changes for small businesses announced in the March 2016 Budget.
- (2) Mr Shipton said that: properties were categorised into one of four main groups and there were some differences in the assessment of the open market value of properties in each category; the National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) multipliers for 2017/18 had been reduced by 1.8p compared with 2016/17; and that consultation on the transitional arrangements to apply from 2017 in order to mitigate the impact of excessive increases and reductions in business rates bill following the revaluation had been held in September – October 2016.
- (3) Mr Shipton said, as a result of the Valuation Office Agency's revaluation announced in September 2016, some areas, particularly London and the South East, had seen substantial increases in rateable values.
- (4) In response to questions, he said the multiplier was set by legislation and increased in line with inflation or CPI. He also said the bands for rateable values were set out in legislation.
- (5) In response to comments about businesses demolishing empty buildings to save paying rates, Mr Shipton said that following a consultation held about 18 months ago, about possible alternatives to the existing scheme, the government had concluded that there was not a better alternative and that the current scheme was consistent with schemes in other countries.
- (6) Resolved that the impact of the 2017 business rates revaluation, including the recalibration of the NNDR multiplier and transitional arrangements, and the additional reliefs for small businesses be noted.

224. Kent Wide Area Review 2016/17

(Item C4)

- (1) Allan Baillie (Skills and Employability Manager) introduced the report which provided an overview and summary of the Area Review process. He said: the Kent area review had begun in December 2016; Kent was in the final wave of the national review programme; it was anticipated the national review would be completed by April; and that the Steering Group would identify and debate potential options at its meeting scheduled for April 2017.
- (2) Mr Baillie referred in particular to paragraphs 2 and 3 of the report which set out the purpose of area reviews and the governance arrangements for their conduct.

- (3) Resolved that the progress to date of the Kent Area Review be noted.

225. Kent and Medway Employer Guilds

(Item C5)

- (1) Mr Dance (Cabinet Member for Economic Development) said the first Guild (Hospitality and Tourism) had been created in 2015 and had been important in raising the awareness of job and career opportunities in the sector among young people.
- (2) Allan Baillie (Skills and Employability Manager) introduced the report which set out progress on the operation of the Kent and Medway Employer Guilds as well as explaining their inception, development, membership, early impact and future priorities.
- (3) Mr Baillie referred, in particular, to paragraph 3, paragraph 4 and paragraph 5 of the report which set out information about the development of the guilds, their impact and the next steps.
- (4) It was suggested that the Cabinet Committee received a further report at its meeting in November 2017 setting out details of progress against targets.
- (5) Resolved that:
 - (a) The report be noted;
 - (b) The progress of the Guilds in delivering clear outcomes and their impact on education/employer engagement be noted.

226. Ebbsfleet Development Corporation's Implementation Framework

(Item C6)

- (1) Mr Smith (Director of Economic Development) said that Mr Kite and Mr Dance, who were members of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC), were already very familiar with the Implementation Framework being discussed.
- (2) Stephen Dukes (Economic Development Programme Manager) introduced the report which provided an update on the current position of the EDC's Implementation Framework. He said the EDC had been established on 21 April 2015, granted planning powers with effect from 1 July 2015 and had received £310 million in capital funding in the Comprehensive Spending Review and Autumn Statement in 2015.
- (3) Mr Dukes said the EDC was not a plan-making body and had to work within the existing policy frameworks set out in Dartford Borough Council's Core Strategy and Gravesham Borough Council's Local Plan, KCC's Minerals and Waste Local Plan and any other supplementary planning documents adopted by the local authorities. The EDC was therefore seeking endorsement of the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework setting out its vision for the Garden City. Mr Dukes drew attention to paragraph 5.5 of the report which set out the comments made by Dartford Borough Council and Gravesham Borough

Council following consideration of the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework on 26 and 30 January 2017 respectively.

- (4) Resolved that the Cabinet Member for Economic Development be recommended to advise the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation that the County Council:
 - (a) Endorses the Ebbsfleet Implementation Framework as the EDC's statement of ambition for the Garden City, and
 - (b) Will work closely with the EDC to secure the necessary infrastructure to deliver well planned housing and economic growth for the benefit of the local community and the wider area.

227. Building our Industrial Strategy Green Paper - Briefing

(Item C7)

- (1) Barbara Cooper (Director of Growth, Environment and Transport) said it was considered important that this Cabinet Committee had the opportunity to consider the green paper had been published in on 23 January 2017 and to comment on the broad outline of KCC's response to the associated consultation.
- (2) Karla Phillips (Strategic Business Adviser) said the green paper identified that a major barrier to Britain's economic success and prosperity was the level of productivity which varied across the county and was lower overall than in the US, France and Germany. She also drew the Committee's attention to paragraphs 2.3 and 2.4 which summarised the "ten pillars" the government considered important to drive forward the industrial strategy.
- (3) Ms Phillips said that KCC's response to the consultation would be developed using views and evidence provided by Economic Development, Environment, Planning and Enforcement, and Skills and Employability teams and would aim to respond to all relevant questions in the consultation and would address the issues raised in paragraph 3 of the report.
- (4) Members of the Cabinet Committee were generally supportive of the overall approach to developing a response and commented on the role of district and borough councils in ensuring that local areas with significant development needs were not overlooked and the need for a strong strategic infrastructure framework across the whole county.
- (5) In response to a question, Ms Cooper said that any further comments from Members could be emailed to her or to Karla Phillips.
- (6) Ms Phillips undertook to provide additional information to the Cabinet Committee about the proposal in the white paper to create a modern "alderman" role with local councils when it became available.
- (7) Resolved that the briefing on the green paper and the development of a KCC response to the government consultation be noted.

228. Housing White Paper Briefing

(Item C8)

- (1) Sarah Platts (Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Manager) introduced the report which outlined the main provisions of the Housing White Paper published on 7 February 2017 and presented an analysis of its potential impacts, challenges and opportunities.
- (2) Miss Platts referred in particular to paragraph 3 of the report which set out the key provisions of the white paper and to paragraph 4 which set out the impact of the white paper.
- (3) During the discussion Members commented on the need for a Kent-wide structure plan, the need for well-planned housing development, the fact that the Planning Inspectorate often overturned planning decisions on appeal, the impact of section 106 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy, the absence of any requirement to use brownfield sites and the risk of an excessive urbanisation of rural Kent.
- (4) Resolved that the report be noted.

229. Work Programme 2017

(Item C10)

Resolved that the work programme for 2017 be noted subject to the inclusion of an item on Modern Apprenticeships being added to the agenda for the Cabinet Committee meeting scheduled for 8 June 2017 and an item on the Performance of Guilds being added to the agenda for the meeting scheduled for November 2017.

230. RGF Programmes and Framework for Monitoring Report

(Item D2)

- (1) Jacqui Ward (Strategic Programme Manager) introduced the report which provided an update on RGF Programmes and information about the jobs created and safeguarded as well as outstanding debt.
- (2) In response to questions, Ms Ward said: the Department of Business Enterprise, Innovation and Skills (BEIS) required KCC to confirm that money allocated to KCC from the funds was defrayed or transferred to the companies participating in the schemes; lessons about the need for consistency learned from the Tiger Fund were being applied to the other funds; the returns submitted by the companies had been simplified and, as a result, changes since the previous quarter had been anticipated.
- (3) Resolved that the report be noted.

231. Performance Dashboard

(Item D1)

- (1) Richard Fitzgerald (Business Intelligence Manager – Performance) introduced the report which showed progress made against targets for key performance indicators. He said there was a good level of overall performance.
- (2) In response to comments Ms Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport) said the authority worked closely with Medway Council and Kent district councils to attract funding from Sport England.
- (3) Resolved that the report be noted.

232. Chairman's Announcement

Mr Wickham thanked Members for their contributions to the work of the committee and said he had been honoured to be its Chairman over the last 7 years.