

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Kent County Council held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 7 December 2017.

PRESENT:

Mr D L Brazier (Chairman)
Mr M J Angell (Vice-Chairman)

Mrs A D Allen, MBE, Mr M A C Balfour, Mr P V Barrington-King, Mrs C Bell, Mrs P M Beresford, Mrs R Binks, Mr R H Bird, Mr A Booth, Mr A H T Bowles, Mr D Butler, Miss S J Carey, Mr P B Carter, CBE, Mrs S Chandler, Mr N J D Chard, Mr I S Chittenden, Mrs P T Cole, Mr N J Collor, Mr A Cook, Mr G Cooke, Mr P C Cooper, Mrs M E Crabtree, Mr D S Daley, Mr M C Dance, Miss E Dawson, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mr T Dhesi, Mr D Farrell, Mrs L Game, Mrs S Gent, Mr G K Gibbens, Ms S Hamilton, Mr P M Harman, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr A R Hills, Mrs S V Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mr P J Homewood, Mr A J Hook, Mr M J Horwood, Mr E E C Hotson, Mr J A Kite, MBE, Mr S J G Koowaree, Mr P W A Lake, Mr B H Lewis, Ida Linfield, Mr R L H Long, TD, Mr R C Love, Mr G Lymer, Mr R A Marsh, Ms D Marsh, Mr J P McInroy, Mr P J Messenger, Mr D Murphy, Mr M J Northey, Mr P J Oakford, Mr J M Ozog, Mr R A Pascoe, Mr M D Payne, Mrs S Prendergast, Mr K Pugh, Miss C Rankin, Mr H Rayner, Mr A M Ridgers, Mr J D Simmonds, MBE, Mrs P A V Stockell, Dr L Sullivan, Mr B J Sweetland, Mr I Thomas, Mr M E Whybrow and Mr J Wright

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr D Cockburn (Corporate Director Strategic & Corporate Services), Mr B Watts (General Counsel), Ms A Singh (Corporate Director, Adult Social Care and Health), Mrs A Beer (Corporate Director Engagement, Organisation Design & Development), Mrs B Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport), Mr M Dunkley (Corporate Director for Children Young People and Education), Mr A Scott-Clark (Director of Public Health) and Mr A Wood (Corporate Director of Finance)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

38. Apologies for Absence

The General Counsel reported apologies from Mr Bartlett, Ms Constantine, Mr Gough, Mr Manion, Mr Monk, Mr Simkins and Mr Whiting.

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

(1) Mr Thomas declared an interest, in relation to any discussion regarding a new hospital in Canterbury, as a member of Canterbury City Council's Planning Committee.

(2) Mr Horwood stated that he was in the process of updating his Disclosable Pecuniary Interest form and was now working for UK Power Networks.

(3) Mr Lewis declared an interest in Item 7 as his wife was employed by the County Council.

(4) Dr Sullivan declared an interest as her husband was employed by the County Council in the Early Help and Prevention Team.

(5) Mr Koowaree declared an interest in Item 9 as his grandchild was a Looked After Child.

(6) Mr Hook declared an interest, during the debate in Item 9, as his partner was a Probation Officer.

40. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2017 and, if in order, to be approved as a correct record

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2017 be approved as a correct record.

41. Chairman's Announcements

(a) Member Development Charter Plus

(1) The Chairman informed Members that Kent County Council had been awarded the Member Development Charter Plus for the next 3 years; a formal presentation would take place at a future meeting of the County Council.

(b) Silver Employer Recognition Award

(2) The Chairman informed Members that Kent County Council had achieved the Silver Employer Recognition Award from the Ministry for Defence in relation to its support for the armed forces.

(3) Mr Long, KCC's Armed Forces Champion, read the citation and presented the certificate to the Chairman.

(c) Mr Matt Dunkley, CBE

(4) The Chairman introduced Matt Dunkley, CBE, Corporate Director, Children, Young People and Education, who joined KCC on 27 November 2017.

(5) Mr Dunkley was invited to introduce himself and briefly set out his role.

(6) Mr Carter paid tribute to Patrick Leeson, former Corporate Director - Education & Young People Services, for his service and contribution to the County Council and young people in Kent. Mr Carter welcomed Mr Leeson's appointment as the Chairman of the Education Trading Service model.

(d) Honorary Alderman

(7) The Chairman reminded Members that the additional meeting for the Honorary Aldermen would take place at 12.30pm or on the rising of the County Council whichever was the earlier.

42. Questions

In accordance with Procedure Rule 1.17(4), 4 questions were asked and replies given. A record of all questions put and answers given at the meeting is available [online](#) with the papers for this meeting. Question 2 was not put, as the Member who submitted the question was absent, but a written answer was provided.

43. Report by Leader of the Council (Oral)

- (1) The Leader updated the Council on events since the previous meeting.
- (2) Mr Carter stated that his report would focus on East Kent Hospital and subsidised bus services.
- (3) Mr Carter referred to the proposed options for reconfiguration of Accident and Emergency (A&E) services in East Kent and expressed the view that there should be a third option for a new hospital for Canterbury alongside the proposals for hospitals in Margate and Ashford. He disputed the claim that Canterbury did not fulfil the Keogh criteria for A&E or consultant A&E services as Canterbury's current population was 240,000 and by 2030 it would be 280,000. This third option was also supported by the Leader of Canterbury City Council.
- (4) Mr Carter highlighted the points publicised in the letter from Kent MPs concerning potential diminution in the budget and delivery of subsidised bus routes in Kent. He stated that KCC had not removed any subsidies for bus routes in the last 12 months, however, the bus operators had chosen to change scheduled services. He stated that KCC's budget had remained constant for 2017/18 at £7.5 million.
- (5) Mr Carter confirmed that he planned to meet Arriva and Stagecoach in advance of the public consultation. He would attempt to persuade them to keep a significant number of the unsubsidised routes. He would also be meeting other smaller bus operators to discuss the routes at risk to establish how they might be able to potentially reduce the impact if the bigger companies chose to remove some of their services. There would also be meetings with a number of taxi operators across the County on the development of the click and ride taxi share scheme to support rural communities alongside expanding community bus services and the Kent Carrier bus services. He confirmed that an indicative budget had been set for this purpose.
- (6) Mr Carter stated that these actions demonstrated a commitment to passengers on some very marginal routes, but he also referred to the commitment and duty to tax payers who may question if a subsidy of £18.50 per bus ride was the best way to use public money.
- (7) Mr Carter emphasised that in addition to the pressure from Government in reducing KCC's budget, there was the additional pressure of an above inflation price increase in the coming financial year of 3.5% proposed by both Arriva and Stagecoach. He expressed the hope that it would be possible to negotiate a lower settlement with the bus companies.

(8) Mr Carter stated that other Local Authorities had already, or were proposing to, significantly reduce or end bus subsidies for socially necessary routes. This was due to the financial pressures that many County areas were under to maintain vital statutory services.

(9) Mr Bird, the Leader of the Opposition, welcomed the Leader's comment in support of a vibrant and viable hospital in Canterbury and emphasised that this hospital had to be backed up by the delivery of trained medical staff.

(10) Mr Bird supported the more proactive way of dealing with the bus companies, recognising that bus services were socially necessary and vital for the community. He acknowledged the unjustified expense of these services to the Council and the difficult decisions to be made. He expressed regret that this had not been done sooner and referred to the unfortunate legislative framework covering County Councils as opposed to areas with elected mayors.

(11) Mr Farrell, the Leader of the Labour group, agreed with Mr Carter's response to East Kent Hospitals and stated that there was the need for a third option due to the growing population of that area.

(12) Mr Farrell referred to the consultation on subsidised bus services and the way that the public would perceive the validity of this if the budget was set before the public consultation closed. He acknowledged that Uber like technology could be operating public transport of the future, but it needed to be remembered that this would be serving some of the most financially and technologically deprived people in the County.

(13) Mr Farrell stated that County Council had undermined its own argument in relation to the pressures on local government finance by agreeing a 15% increase in Members allowances. He thanked to all KCC staff for their efforts over the last year.

(14) Mr Whybrow, Leader of the Independents Group, agreed with the Opposition Leader's comments on Mr Carter's update on East Kent Hospitals. Mr Whybrow referred to the increasing number of children and pensioners who were in poverty compared to four years ago.

(15) Mr Whybrow expressed concern at the apparent lack of understanding that some MPs had of local government funding and referred to the Autumn Budget statement not providing additional funding for children's services and adult social care.

(16) In relation to subsidised bus services, Mr Whybrow welcomed the Leaders personal involvement in protecting bus services. He suggested considering the funding pilots for rural bus services being carried out by Essex and Suffolk County Councils.

(17) In replying to the other Leader's comments, Mr Carter referred to the awaited Local Government settlement. He was hopeful that KCC might get some relief on the expansion of the transitional grant and possibly be the recipient of 100% business growth pilots. He expressed his gratitude to the other Leaders for their support for an option 3 to provide a medical school in Canterbury next to the hospital.

(18) In conclusion Mr Carter thanked all the staff for their efforts this year and drew attention to the good rating for the Ofsted inspection of children's services. He thanked the other Leaders and new opposition Members for the responsible way in which they had carried out their roles since the election and he looked forward to working with them in the New Year to make sure that the best outcomes and services were delivered for the people of Kent.

44. KCC engagement with the Kent & Medway NHS Sustainability and Transformation Plan

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

"That County Council:

- a) Note the successful engagement of the County Council with the STP to date;
- b) Note the latest developments regarding the STP, in particular the move towards a single Strategic Commissioner for health and two Accountable Care Partnerships;
- c) Agree the principles as the basis for KCC engagement in the STP discussions set out in Section 4;
- d) Note and agree the arrangements for Member oversight and decision-making for proposals which may emanate from STP engagement."

(2) Following the debate, the motion was agreed without a formal vote.

(3) RESOLVED that the County Council:

- a) Notes the successful engagement of the County Council with the STP to date;
- b) Notes the latest developments regarding the STP, in particular the move towards a single Strategic Commissioner for health and two Accountable Care Partnerships;
- c) Agrees the principles as the basis for KCC engagement in the STP discussions set out in Section 4;
- d) Notes and agrees the arrangements for Member oversight and decision-making for proposals which may emanate from STP engagement.

45. Kent Health and Wellbeing Board - Annual Report

1) Mr Oakford moved and Mr Carter 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."

- (2) Following the debate, the motion was agreed without a formal vote.
- (3) RESOLVED that the County Council agrees that the Kent Health and Wellbeing Board has fulfilled its responsibilities under its Terms of Reference

46. Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board - Annual Report

- (1) Mr Gibbens moved and Ms Marsh seconded the following motion:

“County Council is asked to COMMENT on the progress and improvements made during 2016-17, as detailed in the Annual Report from the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board and ENDORSE the 2016-17 Annual Report.”

- (2) Ms Deborah Stuart-Angus, Independent Chair of the Kent Safeguarding Adults Board, addressed the meeting and answered a number of questions from Members.
- (3) Following the debate, the motion was agreed without a formal vote.
- (4) RESOLVED that the 2016/17 Annual Report from Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board be endorsed and the comments made by Members be noted.

47. Motion for Time Limited Debate

- (1) Mr Bird moved and Ida Linfield seconded the following motion:

“This Council faces considerable and increasing challenges including growing demand, rising costs and reduction in government funding. To ensure that we continue to deliver the services that matter most to the people of Kent, public engagement is vital.

This Council supports the principle of public participation in County Council meetings.

This council therefore agrees to request that the General Counsel explore options and present a paper to the meeting in March 2018 to introduce a Public Question Time to ensure that we meet the Council's priorities and to join with our District colleagues and other County Council peers in introducing the ability for the residents to have their say.”

- (2) Following the debate the Chairman put the motion set out in paragraph (1) above to the vote and the voting was as follows:

For (13)

Mr R Bird, Mr I Chittenden, Mr D Daley, Mrs T Dean, Mr T Dhesi, Mr D Farrell, Mr P Harman, Mr A Hook, Mr G Koowaree, Mr B Lewis, Ida Linfield, Dr L Sullivan, Mr M Whybrow.

Against (55)

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Mrs A Allen, Mr M Angell, Mr M Balfour, Mr P Barrington-King, Mrs C Bell, Mrs P Beresford, Mr A Booth, Mr A Bowles, Mr D Butler, Miss S Carey, Mr P Carter, Mrs S Chandler, Mr N Chard, Mrs P Cole, Mr N Collor, Mr A Cook, Mr G Cooke, Mr P Cooper, Mrs M Crabtree, Mr M Dance, Miss E Dawson, Mrs L Game, Mrs S Gent, Mr G Gibbens, Ms S Hamilton, Mr M Hill, Mr T Hills, Mrs S Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mr P Homewood, Mr M Horwood, Mr E Hotson, Mr J Kite, Mr P Lake, Mr R Long, Mr G Lymer, Mr A Marsh, Ms D Marsh, Mr J McInroy, Mr P Messenger, Mr D Murphy, Mr M Northey, Mr P Oakford, Mr J Ozog, Mr D Pascoe, Mr M Payne, Mrs S Prendergast, Mr K Pugh, Mr J Simmonds, Mr B Sweetland, Miss C Rankin, Mr H Rayner, Mr A Ridgers, Mr I Thomas, Mr J Wright.

Abstain (2)

Mrs R Binks, Mr R Love

Motion lost