

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Kent County Council held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 15 March 2018.

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, Mr P Bartlett, Mrs C Bell, Mrs P M Beresford, Mrs R Binks, Mr R H Bird, Mr T Bond, Mr A H T Bowles, 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, Ms K Constantine, Mr A Cook, Mr G Cooke, Mr P C Cooper, Mrs M E Crabtree, Mr D S Daley, Miss E Dawson, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mr T Dhesi, Mr D Farrell, Mrs L Game, Mrs S Gent, Mr G K Gibbens, Mr R W Gough, 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 E E C Hotson, Mrs L Hurst, 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 S C Manion, Mr R A Marsh, Mr J P McInroy, Mr P J Messenger, Mr D D Monk, 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 C Simkins, Mr J D Simmonds, MBE, Mrs P A V Stockell, Dr L Sullivan, Mr B J Sweetland, Mr I Thomas, Mr M Whiting, Mr M E Whybrow and Mr J Wright

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr D Cockburn (Corporate Director Strategic & Corporate Services) and Mr B Watts (General Counsel)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

55. Apologies for Absence

The General Counsel reported apologies from Mr Booth, Mr Butler, Mr Dance, Mr Horwood, Mrs Marsh, Mr Murphy.

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

Item 7 – Pay Policy Statement

(1) Dr L Sullivan declared an interest as her husband worked as an Early Help Worker for Kent County Council.

(2) Mr B H Lewis declared an interest as his wife was employed by Kent County Council.

Item 8 – Treasury Management – 6 Month Review – 2017-18

(3) Mr Bartlett declared an interest as an employee of the Bank of New York Mellon (BNYM). He stated that it was a voluntary announcement for transparency purposes and he did not intend to participate or vote on the item.

57. Minutes of the meetings held on 7 December 2017 and 20 February 2018, if in order, to be approved as a correct record

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 7 December 2017 and 20 February 2018 be approved as a correct record.

58. Chairman's Announcements

(a) Mr Bertie Bassam

(1) The Chairman referred to the death of Mr Bertie Bassam on Friday 22 December 2017, which had been notified to Members.. Mr Bassam was a former Conservative Member for Dartford South East between 1997 and 2009. Mr Bassam's funeral had taken place on Thursday 18 January 2018.

(2) Mr Carter, Mr Kite and Mr Bird paid tribute to Mr Bassam.

(3) At the end of the tributes all Members stood in silence in memory of Mr Bassam.

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

(5) This Council records the sense of loss it feels on the sad passing of Mr Bassam and extends to his family and friends our heartfelt sympathy to them in their sad bereavement.

(b) Member Development Charter Plus

(6) The Chairman informed Members that Kent County Council had been successful in its re-assessment for Member Development Charter Plus; he congratulated Members for their contribution towards the successful re-assessments and for the work of the Member Development Steering Group under the chairmanship of Andrew Bowles. The award, recognising Kent County Council's investment in Member Development was displayed in the Chamber.

(7) The Chairman reminded Members that Kent County Council would be re-assessed in November 2020.

(c) Highways, Transportation and Waste KM Charity Team Partnerships Award

(8) The Chairman informed Members that Kent County Council had achieved the KM Charity Team Partnerships Award. The award was in recognition of the help and support provided to KM Charity Team events and services throughout 2017.

(d) Recent Extreme Weather Conditions in Kent

(9) The Chairman thanked all staff within Kent County Council for their extraordinary efforts during the recent snow and bad weather.

(e) Faversham Swing Bridge

(10) The Chairman invited Mr Carter to hand over a letter received from a group of Faversham residents regarding Faversham Swing Bridge.

(11) The Chairman invited Mr Holden, on behalf of the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, to accept the letter and ensure that it was responded to.

(f) Made in Kent Award

(12) The Chairman informed Members that Kent County Council's Made in Kent campaign had been honoured at the National Award Ceremony in recognition of the way it promoted apprenticeships. By the beginning of March, more than 4,800 people had registered on Kent County Council's recruitment site and at least 236 young people in Kent had been placed in apprenticeships.

(g) Lizzy Yarnold

(13) The Chairman informed Members of the success at the Winter Olympics of Lizzy Yarnold, Milly Knight and James Barnes-Miller who had been Members of the Kent FANS scheme (Free Access for National Sports People) and had been awarded the Invicta Award by Kent County Council's Members.

(h) Paul Wickenden

(14) The Chairman informed Members that Paul Wickenden would be retiring on Thursday 29 March after serving the Local Authority for 36 years. He thanked Paul for the guidance and support he had provided to Members.

(15) Paul Wickenden thanked Members for their generosity and said he was most grateful for the support that he had received from Members and staff within Kent County Council.

59. Questions

In accordance with Procedure Rule 1.17(4), 7 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.

60. 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 Council's overspend in the current financial year and said that it was anticipated to reduce by £2 million, subject to a report to Cabinet. He stated that part of the budget reduction was as a result of the un-met asylum costs which had reduced from £4.6 million to £3.6 million. He stated that the anticipated

share of the business rate pilot for Kent County Council was expected to increase by £2 million. The reduction of £1 million on the un-met asylum costs was as a result of receiving two government grants. One of the grants received was from the Home Office and one of the grants was from the Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government, worth £600,000 to the County Council. Mr Carter said that the grant was paid to all Local Authorities across the country to allow capacity to grow. Mr Carter stated that the additional benefit to make the figure up to £1 million was that the Home Office was processing asylum cases much faster than usual which meant that a number of the 18+ Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking young people were entitled to receive housing benefits, which reduced the financial pressure on accommodation costs for those 18+ Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking young people.

(3) Mr Carter referred to the recent extreme weather conditions in Kent and said that costs would be managed through the winter reserve. He commented on the detrimental impact that the bad weather had on roads in Kent and said that in addition to the provisional £2.4 million that had been allocated for road maintenance and drainage repairs, it was intended that an additional £2 million would be invested into the budget. Mr Carter stated that Kent-based civil engineering companies had been appointed to undertake the repair work that was required on Kent roads on a district-by-district basis. Mr Carter stated that the progress that had been made in regard to road repairs in Kent would be reflected on in June, as well as the adequacy of the budget. Mr Carter expressed the view that the work being undertaken on Kent's roads needed to be of a good standard.

(4) Mr Carter said that a date had not yet been set for a meeting with the new Minister of State for Immigration to discuss the remaining £3.6 million shortfall in Kent. He said that many other authorities in the country were bearing the financial burden in un-met costs of asylum. The shortfall of £3.6 million was concerning and of significance compared to the totality of the Home Office budget. Mr Carter emphasised that Government needed to reimburse all sectors of Local Government based on the actual costs of supporting Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking young people in their communities.

(5) Mr Carter expressed his view that the Government should not expect upper-tier authorities across the country to fund the shortfall in the costs of expanding existing schools and providing new schools for the substantive rise in school populations across the country. Mr Carter referred to the County Council Budget meeting in February 2018 and said that Kent had £120 million capital shortfall predicted over the next 3 years. £50 million worth of additional borrowing had been put in the revenue budget, but this fell significantly short of the £120million that was required. Mr Carter stated that he intended to meet Kent MP's to encourage them to put pressure on Government to meet the shortfall to ensure that Government funded the expansions of their secondary of their secondary academies as the bulge in population moved from primary to secondary.

(6) In conclusion, Mr Carter referred to the integration of Health and Social Care which had been discussed at Health Reform and Public Health Cabinet Committee meetings. Mr Carter stated that whilst Adult Social Care provided help and support, it was important to recognise that all providers, including the third sector, helped and supported services to GP's. Mr Carter said that the first workshop would be held next week and would bring providers together with many of the GP's, to discuss targets

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and how people in Kent can help to ensure that the good workforce of providers is supported to support better health care and social care outcomes.

(7) Mr Bird, the Leader of the Opposition, started by thanking all staff for their efforts in continuing to provide key services in Kent during the difficult weather conditions.

(8) Mr Bird referred to the un-met asylum costs and said that the additional funding was welcomed. He said that the national government needed to recognise that Local Authorities would not be able function to the best of their ability without adequate financial support in place.

(9) Mr Bird mentioned the reference made by Mr Carter to potholes, and sought an assurance on the quality of repairs.

(10) In conclusion, Mr Bird referred to the Sustainability Transformation Plan and the establishment of clusters, he said that resources were a significant driver of the plan, including staffing. He said that it was important for Kent to ensure that appropriately qualified staff were in post to maintain the Social Care services which were being provided to Kent residents.

(11) Mr Farrell, Leader of the Labour Group, thanked Members and staff for their resilience and dedication to keep core services open within Kent during the recent extreme weather conditions.

(12) In relation to the issue of potholes in Kent, Mr Farrell welcomed the additional funding available to address the issue of potholes across Kent and reduce the current backlog.

(13) Mr Farrell referred to the Sustainability Transformation Plan and said that the emphasis that the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care placed on protecting adults at risk of abuse or neglect was vital, and the steps to improve the execution of safeguarding through the new operating model were welcomed.

(14) Mr Whybrow, Leader of the Independents Group referred to the Chancellor's Spring Statement and asked Mr Carter if he could provide a financial update.

(15) In relation to the issue of potholes, Mr Whybrow said that Kent must ensure the roads were resurfaced to a good standard, rather than patched. Mr Whybrow also stated that the utilities companies fixing Kent roads should be held accountable when roads were not fixed well.

(16) Mr Whybrow referred to funding within Social Care and said that single parents and vulnerable people with disabilities could be at the most risk by 2021-2022, because of austerity.

(17) In replying to the other Leaders' comments, Mr Carter referred to social care integration and said that the additional funding was required to ensure that new financial benefits and outcomes could be delivered whilst pressures reduced.

(18) Mr Carter responded to concerns regarding quality control of pothole repairs and explained the quality control that was in place and said that the additional £2 million would start to be invested into road maintenance.

(19) Mr Carter stated that he had hoped to receive additional money for road maintenance and social care from the Bellwin Scheme but Kent was above the eligibility threshold.

(20) Mr Carter referred to the Fair Funding Review and stated that the mileage and usage of roads in Kent was high. He said that the increasing number of HGV's on roads was detrimental to the life expectancy of those roads.

(21) Mr Carter referred to comments made on the Chancellor's Spring Statement and stated that a spending review would take place prior to 2020 which would set out the departmental expenditure of the public exchequers investment in the delivery of public services.

61. Pay Policy Statement

(1) Mr Hotson moved and Mr Lymer seconded the following motion:

“County Council endorses the attached Pay Policy Statement.”

(2) Following the debate the motion as set out in paragraph (1) was agreed without a formal vote.

(3) RESOLVED that the Pay Policy Statement 2017 be endorsed.

62. Treasury Management - 6 Month Review - 2017-18

(1) Mr Simmonds moved and Mrs Crabtree seconded the following motion:

“Members are asked to consider and comment on the report.”

(2) Following the debate the motion as set out in paragraph (1) was agreed without a formal vote.

(3) RESOLVED that the report and comments be noted.

63. Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees - terms of reference and membership

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

“Members are asked to agree the establishment of a new Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee of Kent County Council, Medway Council, East Sussex County Council and Bexley Council to meet the requirements of health scrutiny legislation in relation to consultation by the NHS with these local authorities on proposed changes to Hyper Acute and Acute Stroke Services in Kent and Medway; and

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agree an amendment to the membership of the existing Kent & Medway Joint Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee to establish parity of membership between Kent and Medway Councils.”

(2) Following the debate the motion as set out in paragraph (1) was agreed without a formal vote.

(3) RESOLVED that the report and comments be noted.

64. Presentation of Kent Invicta Award to Mr Geoff Miles

(1) The Chairman welcomed Mr Miles to the meeting to receive the Kent Invicta Award for 2018. The Kent Invicta Award recognised residents of Kent who had achieved excellence in their chosen field or who had provided exceptional service to the County. The Chairman outlined the many contributions made to Kent by Mr Miles.

(2) The Chairman stated that he was delighted that the Group Leaders had agreed unanimously that the Award should be presented to Mr Miles and it gave him great pleasure, on behalf of all KCC Members, to present him with the award and 2 cheques for a total of £5,000 for his chosen charities, Kent Lung Awareness and The Blackthorn Trust.

(3) Mr Carter congratulated Mr Miles on his award and outlined the contribution he had made in particular to the lives of young people in Kent. In accepting this award, Mr Miles responded and expressed his thanks to Members.