

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 24 May 2023

PRESENT: Mr R J Thomas (Chair), Mr N Baker, Mr P V Barrington-King, Mr T Bond, Mr A Brady, Mr T Cannon, Mr N J D Chard, Mr G Cooke, Mr P C Cooper, Mr M Dendor, Mr A J Hook, Rich Lehmann, Mr J P McInroy, Ms M Dawkins and Ms S Hamilton

ALSO PRESENT: Mr P Oakford

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr D Shipton (Head of Finance Policy, Planning and Strategy), Mrs A Beer (Deputy Chief Executive), Mrs R Spore (Director of Infrastructure), Mr B Watts (General Counsel), Mr D Whittle (Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance), Ms L Gannon (Director of Technology), Miss K Reynolds (Democratic Services Officer), Mr A Carty (Head of Facilities Management), Ms J Johnson (Partnership and Programmes Manager), Mr P Murphy (Infrastructure Business Partner) and Mr J Sanderson (Head of Property Operations)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

140. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item 2)

Apologies for absence had been received from Dr Sullivan, Mr Bartlett and Mr Rayner. Ms Dawkins was present as substitute for Dr Sullivan and Ms Hamilton was present as substitute for Mr Bartlett.

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

(Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

142. Minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2023

(Item 4)

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2023 are correctly recorded and they be signed by the Chair. There were no matters arising.

143. Performance Dashboard for the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department

(Item 5)

Shellina Prendergast, Cabinet Member for Communications, Engagement, People and Partnerships was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr David Whittle introduced the report which updated the Committee on the progress made against targets set for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
2. In response to questions and comments from Members it was said that:
 - a) Work was being undertaken to centralise complaint handling to ensure that best practice was shared easily across the Council. However, due to the backlog in some areas this was not expected to return to Green by the time of the next report.
 - b) b) Regarding the Red RAG rating for the 'Percentage of daytime calls to Contact Point answered', it was confirmed that there were financial penalties in place for not meeting contractual requirements and these were reinvested in the service. However, Mrs Amanda Beer and Mrs Prendergast said that it was necessary to review the targets in light of the current operating context for call centres, which had changed significantly since the targets were first set. The current contract for the call centre expires in December 2025 and an update and further information on the future requirements for the service would be provided to the Committee in due course
 - c) Mr Ben Watts confirmed that an annual report on Information Governance would be provided at the July meeting of the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee. This would include further information regarding the ongoing work to address the underperformance in KPIs related to completing Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and Subject Access Requests (SARs) within statutory timescales. A briefing providing more detail, including examples of requests received, could be provided to Members ahead of the meeting.
3. RESOLVED to note the performance position for the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department and comment on the KPIs and targets proposed for 2023/24.

144. Facilities Management Bi-Annual Update

(Item 6)

1. Mr James Sanderson introduced the report which provided the Committee with a biannual update on KCC's Facilities Management arrangements to provide services across both the corporate and schools estate, for which KCC has responsibility. It includes an update on the performance of the current contract and changes over the last six months. This was the first report since the disaggregated facilities management (FM) model came into effect from November 2022.
2. In response to questions and comments from Members it was said that, given the vastness and complexity of the estate, there were various tasks being undertaken as part of the transition period to the new model, including the update of asset registers. It was reiterated that while there had been a drop in performance during this transition period, the FM team had been working closely with Skanska colleagues to mobilise and transition to the new contract and working arrangements. There were performance incentives in place.
3. RESOLVED to note the report and progress.

145. Kent Partnerships Update - Kent Estates Partnership (KEP) / Kent Connects

(Item 7)

1. Mr Phil Murphy introduced the report which provided an annual update on the two multi-agency partnerships: Kent Estates Partnership and Kent Connects. Mr Murphy confirmed that the partnerships continued to thrive and provide benefits to KCC.
2. Mr Murphy and Ms Julie Johnson responded to the following questions and comments from Members:
 - a) Asked about the processes related to the Land Release Fund (LRF) and Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF), it was said that these funds were only available to councils. The External Partnerships Team in the Infrastructure division worked with these local authorities to identify projects that fulfil the eligibility criteria.
 - b) Asked about the third round of the BLRF, it was said that an update could be provided to Members as part of the next annual update. A full list of the projects that had been undertaken would be provided to Members outside of the meeting.
3. RESOLVED to note progress to date and the development of the partnerships.

146. 23/00037 - Microsoft Licencing Agreement Contract Award

(Item 8)

1. Ms Lisa Gannon introduced the report which outlined the proposal to enter into a new 3-year licencing agreement between July 2023 and June 2026. It was said that the 3-year agreement allowed for a degree of stability and secured beneficial pricing.
2. In response to questions and comments from Members it was said that, due to the current market conditions, the Council had limited alternative options. This was consistent with the experience of other councils.
3. RESOLVED to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services on the proposed decision to:
 - a. agree to enter into a new Microsoft licencing agreement for 3 years to meet Kent County Council business and Infrastructure licencing requirements; and
 - b. delegate authority to the Director of Technology in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, for the necessary contractual negotiations to enter into any legal agreements required to implement the above.

147. Enterprise Business Capabilities (EBC) Modernisation

(Item 9)

1. Ms Gannon introduced the report which provided Members with an update on the current progress of the EBC Program and outlined the forthcoming steps in relation to decisions around progressing to award and implementation.
2. It was moved that, under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remainder of this item to allow for the discussion of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.
3. In response to questions and concerns raised by the Members, it was agreed that a briefing could be provided ahead of the key decision. The briefing would include further details regarding the projected implementation costs, estimated savings, and risks associated with the options considered.
4. RESOLVED to note progress and the next steps in the programme to modernise the EBC.

148. Work Programme

(Item 10)

1. The clerk advised that the agenda setting for the July Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee meeting had taken place since the publication of the agenda and there had been the minor revisions which had been shared with group representatives.
2. RESOLVED to consider and note the planned work programme for 2023.