

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, 15 January 2025

PRESENT: Mr D L Brazier (Chairman), Mr M Dendor (Vice-Chairman), Mr P Bartlett, Mr T Bond, Mr A Brady, Mr G Cooke, Ms M Dawkins, Rich Lehmann, Mr J P McInroy, Mr H Rayner, Mr P Stepto and Mr C Passmore (Substitute)

ALSO PRESENT: Mr P Oakford

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs A Beer (Chief Executive), Mrs R Spore (Director of Infrastructure), Ms I Hunter-Whitehouse (Domestic Abuse Project Officer), Mr D Whittle, (Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships & Corporate Assurance), Mr B Watts (General Counsel), Mr D Shipton (Head of Finance -Policy, Planning & Strategy), Mr J Betts (Acting Corporate Director Finance), Mr M Wagner (Chief Analyst), and Emily Kennedy (Clerk)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

240. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item 2)

Apologies were received from Mr Cooper, Mr Kite and from Mr Hook for whom Mr Passmore was present.

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

(Item 3)

Mr Bartlett declared an interest in agenda item 6 – Performance Dashboard for the Chief Executive’s Department and Deputy Chief Executive’s Department, relating to FN06: Percentage of sundry debt due to KCC under 6 months old. Mr Bartlett declared that he was a member of the Kent and Medway Integrated Care Partnership.

242. Minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2024

(Item 4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2024 were a correct record and that a paper copy be signed by the Chairman.

243. Draft Revenue and Capital Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan

(Item 5)

1. Mr Oakford introduced the report.
2. Further to questions and comments from Members, it was noted that:

- It would not be known until KCC had received the final settlement whether the grant would include increased costs in payroll for National Insurance. The money was being allocated on the basis of a national formula rather than actual local spending on staff.
- Work was being undertaken to address potential shortfalls in funding for social care provision.
- KCC was working to build up general reserves back to 5%.
- The training budget had not been reduced and the maintenance budget had been increased. Spending had been reduced in many discretionary areas but trying to maintain services to the most vulnerable in the county.

3. RESOLVED to note the update to the administration's draft revenue budget proposals and draft capital programme.

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

(Item 6)

1. Mr Wagner introduced the Performance Dashboard for the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department. It was the second report for 2024/2025 and it showed target results up to the end of October 2024. 21 of the 27 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) achieved target for the latest month and were RAG (Red/Amber/Green) rated Green, two were below target but did achieve the floor standard (Amber), and four did not achieve the floor standard (Red).

The KPI that had dropped below the expected floor standard since the last report was:

FN06: Percentage of sundry debt due to KCC under 6 months old

2. In response to questions and comments from Members it was noted that:
 - Commitment had been sought from directorate services to improve the performance of: GL02: Freedom of Information Act requests completed within 20 working days, and, GL03: Data Protection Act Subject Access Requests (SARs) completed within statutory timescales. Progress had been sustained The backlog had been reduced to a small numbers of cases.
 - A large number of complaints (referred to at CS07) related to the Children's, Young People and Education (CYPE) and the issue was going to be brought to CYPE Cabinet Committee
 - Concerns were raised about what the next step would be regarding debt owed by the Integrated Care Partnership. Members were advised that the next step would be arbitration rather than resolution in a courtroom setting.
 - A supplier incentive scheme was being introduced as well as a new ledger and invoice system. It was hoped that these measures would help to improve the speed with which purchase orders and invoices went through the system and were paid.

- Further work would be undertaken where contracts were to be extended but sundry debts were outstanding. Explanation was given to Members about the impact of high value debts on the KPI reporting.
3. RESOLVED to note the performance position for the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department.

245. Kent & Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024-2029 Year One Update
(Item 7)

1) Mr Whittle introduced the report.

2) Ms Hunter Whitehouse outlined the report.

3) Further to questions and comments from Members, it was noted that:

- Work was being undertaken in schools about healthy relationships. There were resources for schools with lesson plans, there was a page on the KELS website, and posters about 'toxic relationships'.
- There was also an upcoming project co-created with Kent Police, called 'Don't Disrespect'.
- It was difficult to measure impact and outcomes from campaigns but data was collected on engagement.
- Opportunities had been sought to assist people seeking refuge with pets and some locations were able to accept pets. It was noted that the use of pets in domestic abuse situations was very emotive.
- The work of White Ribbon UK was highlighted and that Mr Watts was the 'office ambassador' for this campaign. The Leader was the White Ribbon Ambassador for KCC.
- It was highlighted that any Member can become a champion for White Ribbon.
- The importance of minimising disruption to education where children moved home as a result of domestic abuse, was highlighted.

4) RESOLVED to note:

i) progress made against the Kent & Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy and make recommendations on future delivery plan direction;

ii) the development of the Domestic Abuse Champions scheme alongside the domestic abuse training review for roll out in the spring;

iii) the reaccreditation and KCC's status as a White Ribbon Organisation

iv) risks to future delivery including uncertainty around local and national funding allocation.

246. Work Programme
(Item 8)

RESOLVED to note the work programme.

