

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 on Thursday, 13 September 2018

PRESENT: Mr B J Sweetland (Chairman), Mr R A Marsh (Vice-Chairman), Mr P V Barrington-King, Mr T Bond, Mrs P T Cole, Mr G Cooke (Substitute for Mr N J D Chard), Mrs M E Crabtree, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mr D Farrell, Mr A J Hook (Substitute for Mr R H Bird), Mr P W A Lake, Mr D Murphy, Mrs S Prendergast (Substitute for Mr M D Payne), Mr H Rayner and Mr I Thomas

ALSO PRESENT: Miss S J Carey, Mr E E C Hotson and Mr P J Oakford

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms A Agyepong (Corporate Lead - Equalities and Diversity), Mrs A Beer (Corporate Director Engagement, Organisation Design & Development), Mark Garbett (Portfolio Assurance Manager), Mr V Godfrey (Strategic Commissioner), Ms L Jackson (Policy Manager), Mr M Lloyd (Head of Technology Commissioning and Strategy), Mr D Shipton (Head of Finance (Policy, Planning and Strategy)), Mrs R Spore (Director of Infrastructure), Mr B Watts (General Counsel) and Miss E West (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

100. Membership

(Item 2)

The Chairman announced that Mr Payne and Mr Murphy had replaced Mr McInroy and Miss Rankin as Members of the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee.

101. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item 3)

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Bird, Mr Chard, Mr Payne and David Cockburn. Mr Cooke, Mr Hook and Mrs Prendergast attended as substitutes respectively.

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

(Item 4)

No declarations of interest were received.

103. Minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2018

(Item 5)

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2018 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

104. 18/00049 - Data Centre Exit Strategy

(Item 6)

Michael Lloyd (Head of Technology Strategy and Commissioning), Mark Garbett (Portfolio Assurance Manager), Rebecca Spore (Director of Infrastructure) and Vincent Godfrey (Strategic Commissioner) were in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Hotson (Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services) and Mr Lloyd introduced the report which outlined the requirement to deliver a new data centre solution which would allow Kent County Council to exit from its existing primary data centre in Sessions House and backup data centre in Medway.
 - a) In response to a question, Mr Lloyd said that by delivering the new data centre solution, Kent County Council's projected costs and saving targets within the Medium-Term Financial Plan would be met. Resilience would be removed from County Hall and power outages would be avoided.
 - b) In response to a question, Mr Lloyd discussed the data centre's current arrangements and said that the new data centres would be set up in a commercial space in two geographic locations. If a system were to fail, data would immediately be transferred to the back-up location to prevent disruption.
 - c) In response to a question, Mr Lloyd said that Kent County Council would buy data centre space from companies that supplied data centre services. He reassured Members of the Committee that external users would not be able to access Kent County Council's equipment or data as it remained a closed network environment.
 - d) In response to a question, Mr Lloyd explained the need for the new data centre solution and said that Medway had sought to withdraw from data centre services. He said that if there was no back-up data centre, the risk of losing data and experiencing outages would increase.
 - e) In response to a question, Mr Hotson said that although there was a sufficient amount of space in County Hall, running costs were high. He said that a report would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee to discuss the utilisation of Sessions House.
 - f) In response to a question, Mr Lloyd said that through cloud computing, the majority of Kent County Council's services were hosted in Microsoft data centres in the United Kingdom and Ireland. He said that there were legacy applications within Kent County Council which could not be put into the cloud. Mr Lloyd said that the main saving would be through the decreasing amount of space required within the two separate locations.
 - g) In response to a question, Mr Lloyd confirmed that the decision to exit the current Data Centre estate would cost £1million which would be spent over the duration of the contract, this cost was instead of what was currently being spent. Mr Lloyd said that he would provide a cost illustration to Members of the Committee outside of the meeting.

- h) In response to a question, Ms Spore and Mr Godfrey explained the savings that would be made, and the current utility costs incurred within county hall.
2. RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services to authorise the Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services to award the contract(s) for the provision of a Data Centre solution, including the necessary contractual negotiations and enter into any subsequent necessary legal agreements, be endorsed.

105. Strategic and Corporate Services Performance Dashboard

(Item 7)

Vincent Godfrey (Strategic Commissioner), Rebecca Spore (Head of Infrastructure), Dave Shipton (Head of Finance) and Ben Watts (General Counsel) were in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Godfrey introduced the Strategic and Corporate Services Performance Dashboard which highlighted the progress that had been made against targets set for Key Performance Indicators. Miss Carey (Cabinet Member for Customers, Communications and Performance) said that the report reflected the first quarter and each area that it covered. She stated that a full report would be brought to County Council.
2. Mr Watts informed Members of the Committee that a Freedom of Information (FOI) report would be brought to the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee meeting in November which would provide full detail of the activity that was being undertaken by officers in order to mitigate against the number of FOI requests that were being received.
 - a) In response to a question, Mr Watts said that officers were exploring best practice around recording information to ensure that Members were receiving regular updates in relation to FOI. He confirmed that the number of FOI requests had increased due to the implementation of GDPR.
 - b) In response to a question, Mr Watts referred to the cost of FOI requests each year for Kent County Council and said that a particular exercise could be undertaken to determine this, although it would be difficult to obtain results that were completely accurate. Miss Carey (Cabinet Member for Customers, Communications and Performance) informed Members of the Committee that the FOI report which would be brought to the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee in November would shed light upon the type of FOI requests that Kent County Council received.
 - c) In response to a question, Mr Watts said that preparations were in place to ensure the Kent County Council were able to manage the increase in expectations for FOI requests as an organisation.
 - d) In response to a question, Ms Spore referred to the eight tenants mentioned within the report that were in excess of 6-days and said that management plans and payment plans had been put in place for all of them to determine how rent collection could be approached and to reduce outstanding rent

levels. She said that Kent County Council had explored different ways in which rent collection could be approached and, in some instances, have had to proceed down the legal route and act in order to recover outstanding debts. She discussed the overall levels of rent in August that were outstanding at 60 days and said that this had significantly dropped, and although the amount of rent that was outstanding over 60 days had only dropped slightly, it was presented as a greater proportion of the whole. She said that Kent County Council were working with Gen2 to ensure that processes were robust.

- e) In response to a question, Ms Spore said that there were some specific community groups that were in arrears due to rent.
- f) In response to a question, Mr Shipton and Miss Carey explained a particular indicator within the report and explained the 30-day process.

3. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

106. Annual Equality and Diversity Report 2017-18

(Item 8)

Akua Agyepong (Corporate Lead Equality and Diversity) and Ben Watts (General Counsel) were in attendance for this item.

- 1. Mr Hotson and Ms Agyepong introduced the report which set out progress against the Equality and Human Rights Policy and Objectives 2016-2020, which was a statutory requirement under the Equality Act 2010.
- 2. Mr Watts said that staff and the LGBT group were pleased to see the LGBT flag raised at Sessions House in June, which demonstrated that Kent County Council were open and inclusive. He thanked Members for the role that had been taken in order to make that happen.
 - a) In response to a question relating to Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA), Mr Watts reassured Members of the Committee that action would be taken to ensure that Cabinet Committees were not at a disadvantage by not receiving papers or decisions that required an EqIA.
 - b) In response to a comment, Ms Agyepong reassured Members that they could contact her in relation to EqIA queries and noted comments relating to Members having the opportunity to comment on EqIA's. Mr Watts informed Members that part of the constitutional changes that were being made focused on oversight and processes that could be implemented in relation to the decision-making process to seek to build resilience.
 - c) In response to a question, Ms Agyepong discussed the youth justice figures within the report and said that there was a disproportionate number of boys and young men within youth justice, and Kent County Council were focusing on reducing the figure. Ms Agyepong talked about the fast-changing population in Kent and culture and practice within Kent's schools. Ms Agyepong said that it was important to focus on ensuring that young people were successfully egressing through the criminal justice system.

d) In response to a question, Akua Agyepong discussed the suicide rate figures within the report and said that although there was a particular focus on men, it did not mean that Kent County Council were not looking at the experiences of women. Ms Agyepong said that the main causes for mental health issues in women were domestic violence, long-term health conditions and discrimination.

3. RESOLVED that the report be noted, and the Annual Equality and Diversity Report 2017-18 be approved.

107. Voluntary and Community Sector Policy - Progress 2015-18

(Item 9)

Lydia Jackson (Policy and Relationships Adviser (VCS)) was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Hill (Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services) and Ms Jackson introduced the report which set out an overview of the progress that Kent County Council had made since the policy was adopted and how this had influenced Kent County Council's relationship with the Voluntary and Community Sector.

a) In response to a question, Ms Jackson said that Kent County Council were developing intelligence in the charities data set in order to focus on sustainability within the Voluntary and Community sector and to observe the impact of Kent County Council's funding.

b) In response to a question, Ms Jackson said that funding had been invested by Kent County Council to allow voluntary organisations to become better at being able to tender for contracts.

c) In response to a question, Ms Jackson referred to Kent County Council's overall spend for grants and contracts and said that 'elsewhere' referred to charities that were not based in Kent but were working and operating in Kent.

a) In response to a question, Ms Jackson said that it would be possible to provide information to Members of the Committee relating to individual charity accounts to monitor the amount of spending that was required to run organisations, but this would require analysis of individual accounts and could only be carried out on a sample of charities as it would be more resource-intensive than the high level analysis carried out.

2. The Chairman suggested that a full review on rent and policies be brought to a future meeting of the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee. Members of the Committee supported this.

3. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

108. Data Protection Update

(Item 10)

1. Mr Watts provided a data protection update and announced that all of Kent County Council's Members had completed the data protection training. He said that Kent County Council were developing further contents in relation to the data protection training as part of the work of the Member Development Steering Groups which would be presented to various Committees over upcoming months. He thanked Members for the level of support that they had given when undertaking the training and for encouraging one another.
2. Mr Watts said that work was being undertaken by Kent County Council's ICT team to provide solutions for requests from Members.
3. The Data Protection update was noted by Members of the Committee.

109. Work Programme 2018/19

(Item 11)

1. RESOLVED that the Work Programme for 2018/19 be noted, subject to the inclusion of the following items:
 - Freedom of Information Update
 - HSE Prosecution (Asbestos)
 - Full Review – Rent and Policies