

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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### ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT CABINET COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee held in the Sessions House on Tuesday, 16 July 2019.

PRESENT: Mr M A C Balfour (Chairman), Mr M D Payne (Vice-Chairman), Mr R H Bird, Mr A Booth, Mr T Bond, Mr D L Brazier, Mr A Cook, Mr N J Collor, Mr A R Hills, Mr R C Love, OBE, Mr J M Ozog, Mr I S Chittenden, Mr B H Lewis, Mr M E Whybrow and Mr H Rayner

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs S V Hohler and Mr M Whiting

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs B Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport) and Mrs S Holt-Castle (Interim Director of Environment, Planning and Enforcement)

#### UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

##### **185. Membership**

*(Item 2)*

Members noted that Mr R Bird had joined the Committee in place of Mr A Hook.

##### **186. Apologies and Substitutes**

*(Item 3)*

Apologies were received from Mr Hill and Mr Holden. Mrs S Hohler attended as a substitute for Mr Hill.

##### **187. Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda**

*(Item 4)*

There were no declarations of interest received.

##### **188. Minutes of the meeting held on 24 May 2019**

*(Item 5)*

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting on 24 May 2019 are a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

##### **189. Verbal Update**

*(Item 6)*

1. Mrs S Hohler (Deputy Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services) announced that the Community Wardens Service had successfully recruited ten

new wardens and subject to passing their accreditation their role within the community would start in August 2019.

2. Mr M Whiting (Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste) provided a verbal update on the following issues:
  - (a) KCC was formally recognised for its proactive approach to risk management and casualty reduction at the EuroRAP results event on 4 July
  - (b) Over 75 highway improvement plans had been developed working with Parishes
  - (c) KCC had secured £2m funding to look at how new technologies could help improve performance of drainage and winter services
  - (d) The Old Chalk New Downs project ran the 'Walk the Chalk' walking festival in June which featured 7 guided walks including one for blind and partially sighted. A total of 78 people took part and KCC received positive feedback
  - (e) The second phase of work at the Pepper Hill Waste Recycling Centre would require the site to be fully closed from Sunday 18th August 2019 for a period of 9 weeks. No kerbside collections would be affected as alternative tipping locations were in place for all kerbside material streams. Also, local residents would be able to use alternative sites with extended opening hours at Swanley, Dartford and Tovil. There also remained an agreement for KCC resident to utilise the sites at Medway, but they would require ID to access their sites. Social media communications via Twitter and Facebook were due to be posted to inform residents of the closure and would be updated as to the progress, timescale of the works and opening hours of alternative sites.
  - (f) A fire at the Ashford Waste Transfer Station on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> June was quickly attended to by the Kent Fire and Rescue Service. Mr Whiting praised the Fire Service, the contractor Biffa and KCC officers who ensured that disruption to residents and District collection crews was minimised.
  - (g) Following KCC intervention, Southern Gas Networks had completed its work on Rye Road in Hawkhurst nearly three weeks ahead of schedule. There was huge concern locally around the original plans to close the road for 11 weeks during the summer, which would have had a massive effect on local residents and businesses, so to reduce this to five weeks was a good result.
  - (h) Mr Whiting congratulated all KCC staff, volunteers and partners who made such a success of the Kent County show. It was a valuable opportunity to talk to residents about their environment concerns. Not surprisingly the biggest challenge was deemed to be plastic, followed by litter and fly tipping, the quantity of buildings/housing development and climate change. There was also good promotion for Kent's Plan Bee with visitors being given free wildflower seeds in support of the Plan.

- (i) The Government has published the Clean Maritime Plan which is the UK's blueprint for clean growth and zero emissions in the maritime sector by 2050 which is in line with KCC's policy on zero emissions. By publishing this plan, the UK becomes one of the first countries since the agreement of the strategy to publish a National Action Plan. The plan was developed in consultation with key stakeholders, including the Clean Maritime Council and it identifies actions on economics, infrastructure, innovation and regulation to bring about a future of zero-emission shipping in the UK.
  - (j) In recent weeks there had been huge disruption on the M2 Junctions 5 to 7 caused by Highways England's works. Mr Whiting wrote a letter to Highways England asking them to postpone all Saturday works and restrict the works to evening only.
3. The Cabinet Member and officers responded to comments and questions as follows:
  - (a) Mr Beaver (Head of Waste Management Services) informed Members that the fire at the Ashford Waste Transfer Station on 27<sup>th</sup> June may have been caused by a number of materials i.e. lithium batteries, hot ash etc. that have often led to a build up of heat. During operation hours a member of the public disposed their waste into the residual bay, and it was believed that when the shovel entered the bunker to turn over the material, air came into contact with the contents which caused the bunker to ignite. After the Pepperhill fire, before closure of the sites, KCC brought in a number of operatives with heat seeking equipment to help detect hotspots around the site and only when satisfied that there were no hotspots was the decision made to close the sites. Ashford was a separate scenario caused through the dispatch of waste by a resident.
  - (b) It was agreed that a briefing be scheduled for all Members on the existing and forthcoming road works
  - (c) Mr Whiting agreed to take Members comments and ensure the following points were raised by Mrs Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport) to Highways England:
    - To further reduce the delay caused by gasworks on Tonbridge Road (A26) due to pressure on surrounding minor roads
    - The continual use of laybys on the A2 by HGV drivers
    - The synchronisation of Lydd traffic lights on J7
    - Unmanned roadworks on the A258 causing congestion
4. RESOLVED that the verbal update be noted, with thanks.

**190. 19/00051 - Fastrack Full Network - Bean Road Tunnel**  
(Item 7)

1. Mr Whiting (Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste) introduced the report that set out the Fastrack Full Network scheme. The Bean

Road Tunnel was one of the core infrastructure projects for the Ebbsfleet Garden City and would help to deliver a high-quality Bus Rapid Transit system for new and existing communities within Gravesham and Dartford.

2. Officers responded to Members comments and questions as follows:
  - (a) Mrs Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport) agreed to respond to Members queries regarding the Oyster Card scheme and whether this would be recognised by the Fastrack Network.
  - (b) Mrs Cooper informed Members that the work would be delivered by Kent County Council through forward funding from Bluewater and some investment from Ebbsfleet Development Corporation. Repayment of the proposed forward funding from Bluewater would be funded from the Fastrack revenue surplus (Fare box).
3. RESOLVED that the proposed decisions (19/00051) to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste to:
  - (a) give approval to the progress of the reference design as shown on Drawing No. B2350500-JAC-HA-XX-DR-D-0001 Rev P01 for development control and land charge disclosures,
  - (b) give approval to progress all statutory approvals or consents required for the scheme including transfer of land and rights,
  - (c) give approval to carry out consultation on the scheme,
  - (d) give approval to underwrite and enter into forward funding and investment funding agreement(s) subject to the approval of the Infrastructure Commissioning Board,
  - (e) give approval to enter into a design & build construction contract as necessary for the delivery of the scheme subject to the approval of the Infrastructure Commissioning Board to the recommended procurement strategy; and
  - (f) give approval for the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment & Transport, under the Officer Scheme of Delegations, to take further or other decisions as may be appropriate to deliver the Fastrack Full Network – Bean Road Tunnel scheme in accordance with these recommendations,

be endorsed.

**191. KCC Bus Feedback Portal - Summary of Feedbacks Received January to May 2019**  
*(Item 8)*

*Phil Lightowler (Head of Public Transport) and Steve Pay (Public Transport Planning and Operations Manager) were in attendance for this item.*

1. Mr Whiting (Cabinet Member for Planning Highways Transport and Waste) introduced the report that set out the results of the Bus Feedback Portal following its implementation and the actions that were due to be carried out by the bus operators as a result of the feedback received.
2. Mr Lightowler informed Members that alongside the less formal feedback conversations that continued to be had between the bus operators and the Cabinet Member, the portal results were a standing agenda item on all Quality Bus Partnership meetings which provided a more formal setting for Public Transport Officers to highlight trends and concerns. In addition, the portal sat alongside a number of school groups (Maidstone, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells) which enabled concerns to be flagged with Public Transport Officers directly. Mr Whiting informed Members that he and Mr Gough (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education) would be sending a letter to all Kent schools informing them of the Bus Feedback Portal and how to register their concerns.
3. Officers responded to Members comments and questions as follows:
  - (a) Mr Lightowler informed Members that the contrast in feedback between the East and West of the county was primarily due to the liability issues around service number 89 (Coxheath to Maidstone) which encountered a number of mechanical failures at the start of the school year, thus increasing the level of complaints received. Furthermore, Stagecoach which operated within the East of the county promoted its local customer care helpline whereas Arriva diverted its customers to a national customer care centre which failed to provide a reliable service.
  - (b) In response to the accessibility of the Bus Feedback Portal, Mr Whiting agreed (through the Chairman) that a small Member working group be established to assist Mr Lightowler and the Communications Team with the system interface and to put recommendations forward on how to improve it. Mr Whiting asked Members to contact Mr Lightowler directly to confirm their interest.
  - (c) Mr Whiting agreed to liaise with Members directly regarding their queries on the following issues:
    - Reinstatement of bus service to assist with new medical centre in Linton
    - Developer roundabouts
  - (d) Mr Lightowler informed Members that not all complaints were congestion related, however, the issues in relation to reliability had been addressed with Stagecoach and plans had been devised to improve service performance. In particular, the Maidstone depot was due to receive a new fleet of double-decker buses which would help to reduce complaints in relation to mechanical faults.
  - (e) In response to Members comments, Mr Pay agreed to present a report on the Bus Feedback Portal on a quarterly basis and to circulate a monthly report to all Members of the Council to help cascade information within their wards.

4. RESOLVED that the contents of the reports be noted, and that the frequency of the results be published on a quarterly basis.

## **192. Performance Dashboard**

*(Item 9)*

*Barbara Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport), Stephanie Holt-Castle (Interim Director of Environment, Planning and Enforcement) and David Beaver (Head of Waste Management) were in attendance for this item.*

1. Mrs Cooper introduced the Performance Dashboard which showed progress made against targets set for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) up to May 2019.
2. Mr Beaver addressed the red rating for KPI *HT01: Potholes repaired in 28 calendar days* and said that the percentage of potholes repaired within the given timescale was behind target due to poor weather conditions and resourcing issues within the Highway Term Maintenance contract, this was primarily in relation to the preparation work required for Brexit which placed additional pressures on Amey. However, urgent faults continued to take precedence and Amey staff were deployed to carry out those works under priority measures to protect the Local Authority from insurance claims. Mr Beaver assured the Committee that resourcing issues had since been resolved and that in June 2019, 92% of potholes had been repaired within the 28-day period and that targets were on track to be achieved for July 2019.
3. Officers responded to Members comments and questions as follows:
  - (a) Mr Beaver acknowledged Members continued concerns and agreed to review the following issues outside of the meeting:
    - The waste tonnage collected by District Councils and how this impacted on waste volumes
    - The need for a revised target on the percentage of municipal waste diverted from landfill; and
    - The need for a revised target on the percentage of municipal waste converted to energy
  - (b) In response to how economic uncertainty impacted on KPI *WM03: Waste recycled and composted at HWRC's*, Mr Beaver said that the amber rating was primarily due to seasonality factors as green waste was not often produced in April. In terms of economic uncertainty, there had been a reduction in large consumers goods and personal finances may have been a contributing factor, however, further work needed to be done to review the reduced rate in which people used the Household Waste Recycling Centre's.
  - (c) Mrs Holt-Castle assured Members that KPI *EPE14: Greenhouse Gas Emissions from KCC Estates in tonnes*, was reducing each year as the Council improved its performance, however, welcomed Members the opportunity to discuss targets outside of the meeting.
  - (d) Mr Beaver informed Members that Amey was under contractual obligations to carry out work that had been designated to them. Capital funding had also been allocated to the Find and Fix Programme which again, allowed KCC to designate work to groups of contractors.

- (e) Mr Beaver acknowledged Members concerns with the incident portal and said that an extensive amount of work had been carried out to improve the systems interface. With regard to the delayed response from the contact centre, Mr Beaver agreed to raise the issue with the appropriate division.
  - (f) In response to Members queries regarding the percentage of young people who had used the Bus Feedback Portal to raise issues on the Kent Saver Travel Card, Mrs Cooper agreed to liaise with Mr Lightowler and respond to Members directly.
  - (g) Mrs Cooper informed Members that some of the targets were contractual which restricted GET from amending the target levels.
- 4. Mr Whiting applauded the performance of Kent County Council and its improved recycling rates which had been achieved through the innovative and commendable efforts of officers. Mr Whiting thanked all those involved for their continued work.
  - 5. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

**193. 2018/19 Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate Equality Review**  
*(Item 10)*

*Stephanie Holt-Castle (Interim Director of Environment, Planning and Enforcement) was in attendance for this item.*

- 1. Mrs Holt-Castle introduced the report that set out the position statement for the Growth, Environment and Transport (GET) Directorate for 2018/19 regarding the embedment of equality and diversity within work programmes and organisational development. The evidence for each project identified had been captured through the Members of the Equality and Diversity group having reviewed one another's division. The GET directorate continued to take a firm approach to equality and diversity as it was integral to KCCs customer service programme and continued to improve the ways in which it understood and responded to customers and non-customers' needs using customer data across all ten protected characteristics.
- 2. Officers responded to Members comments and questions as follows:
  - (a) Mrs Holt-Castle said that GET used a number of internal Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure performance against the equality duty, the principle one however was the number of Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) delivered by each division and signed off by the Director each year. In 2015 the GET directorate had completed 5 EQIAs whereas up to June 2019 the directorate had completed 200 which demonstrated the significant improvement in the quality of EQIAs completed. In terms of what further work needed to be done to improve equality and diversity, the GET directorate had produced a spreadsheet that mapped out all 9 characteristics against the EQIAs and had captured data over the past 12 months which allowed for further analysis at directorate level to be carried out. The learning from that analysis would be used to improve equality and diversity and influence the directorates future customer care activity.

- (b) Mrs Holt-Castle agreed to cascade information to Members regarding future Equality and Diversity briefings.
  - (c) With regard to complaints, Mrs Holt-Castle said that the GET directorate received all data on a quarterly basis and a review would be carried out to identify whether there were any explicit or implicit issues raised around a protected characteristic. A record would also be kept by the directorate as to how that complaint was dealt with and any actions that arose from that complaint. The complaint would also be reviewed by the Directorate Management Team and the GET Equality and Diversity Group to ensure all issues were addressed appropriately. Mrs Holt-Castle agreed to include this information in future reports.
3. RESOLVED that the report be noted, and that the Committee continue to receive an annual report in order to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010.

## **194. Gypsy and Traveller Service - Emerging Policies**

*(Item 11)*

*Stephanie Holt-Castle (Interim Director of Environment, Planning and Enforcement) and Helen Page (Head of Countryside and Community Development Group) were in attendance for this item.*

1. Mrs Hohler (Deputy Cabinet Member for Community and regulatory Services) introduced the report that set out the emerging proposed policy changes of the Kent County Council Gypsy and Traveller Services. In particular, the report outlined the approach to developing an Asset Management Plan and a Draft Pitch Allocation and Site Management Policy. The paper also described the intention to develop a new draft Gypsy and Traveller Service Charges and Rent Setting Policy, and by the end of the financial year 2019, an Unauthorised Encampment Strategy.
2. Mrs Holt-Castle informed Members that a consultation took place in October 2017 on a draft Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Allocation Policy to meet residents' needs and changing demands on the service to ensure sustainable provision for the future. The results of the consultation indicated that Kent County Council had not taken the correct course of action and therefore, extensive work had been carried out over the past 18 months to rectify the issues and develop further proposals to inform two future draft policies and two draft strategies. The draft Pitch Allocation and Site Management Policy, the draft Gypsy and Traveller Service Charges and Rent Setting Policy and the draft Unauthorised Encampment Strategy were due to be brought back to the Committee in autumn 2019 ahead of the respective public consultation.
3. With regard to Asset Management, Ms Page said that a survey had been carried out on 3 of the 8 existing sites managed by Kent County Council and a lifespan project had been devised for each site that calculated the cost of all assets and how much it would cost to replace those assets; this calculation would then be used to inform the annual service charge for residents for the maintenance of communal areas and the rent charge within the Policy. Ms Page said that the plan was to emulate the work across all 8 sites to help inform the Asset Management Plan. There would also be a planned maintenance Programme for each site that would help to reduce the emergency maintenance costs that the service was currently incurring.

4. In terms of the Pitch Allocation and Site Management Policy, Ms Page said that the consultation highlighted the disparity between the application process for social housing and KCC Gypsy and Traveller pitch accommodation. The draft policy addressed the disparities by introducing a banding (prioritisation) system similar to that used by other councils nationally and offered a fairer process. Kent County Council would also be working with District Councils on their Home Choice Based Lettings to enable applicants to apply for bricks and mortar properties. The respondents from the 2017 consultation also referred to the practices of social housing in terms of the Councils vetting procedures and residents would also be required to pay two weeks rent in advance to manage the risk of residents going into arrears.
5. An Unauthorised Encampments Strategy had also been devised as numbers of unauthorised trespassers had risen by 50% since 2018/19. The increase in work had created additional pressures for the Gypsy and Traveller Service and the Strategy helped to address the resource issues to ensure performance of the service could be sustained.
6. Officers responded to Members comments and questions as follows:
  - (a) In response to concerns regarding the statutory obligations placed on district councils to provide accommodation to the Gypsy and Traveller community through the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), Ms Page said that work was being done to review the local letting plans and transit sites in Thanet as part of the emerging Local Plan, however, Ms Page agreed to brief the Member outside of the meeting for further clarity on the matter and to circulate statutory guidance to Members of the Committee.
  - (b) Ms Page said that the term 'steady state' meant that KCC was investing money back into the sites to avoid dilapidation, the cost of which would be covered by the rent. Mrs Page assured Members that KCC was not offering a subsidy and that all proportionate costs were allocated appropriately.
  - (c) In terms of anti-social behaviour and criminal activity displayed by residents on the sites, Ms Page said that KCC had a licence agreement that every tenant had to sign if they wanted to live on one of the pitches. Within the licence agreement there were terms and conditions around acceptable standards of behaviour and enforcement processes were in place, all of which would be addressed within the Pitch Allocation Policy.
  - (d) Ms Page said that the Asset Management Plan would help to inform the rent charge, however KCC were looking to make it fair and equitable and in line with other forms of social housing. The rent from the Gypsy and Traveller site residents was considerably low compared with other social housing charges; by aligning it with the national cost, this would reduce preference over sites and the Policy would also introduce banding and eligibility criteria to ensure that KCC offered pitch allocations to those who met the correct standards.
  - (e) The Chairman asked that a briefing be held for all Members of the Council on the emerging policies of the Gypsy and Traveller Service.
7. RESOLVED that the emerging proposed policies and strategies, and Asset Management Plan, be noted.

**195. 19/00053 - Dover Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) - Infrastructure delivery partner with Dover District Council**  
(Item 12)

*Barry Stiff (Project Manager, Capital Programme Team) was in attendance for this item.*

1. Mr Whiting (Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste) introduced the report that set out the proposed decision for Kent County Council to enter into a legal agreement with Dover District Council in order to act as an infrastructure delivery partner and to project manage the design, detail, statutory approvals and construction contract of the Dover Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project.
2. Mr Stiff said that the Dover Rapid Transit project would provide a high quality and reliable public transport service that would link major housing allocations at Whitfield (5,750 homes) to Dover Town Centre and the High-Speed Rail services at Dover Priory Station. The new route would be delivered through the build-out of the housing developments and the existing highway network. The key elements of infrastructure identified for the BRT route included:
  - (a) a new A2 overbridge for buses, pedestrians and cyclists
  - (b) a new dedicated bus link through White Cliffs Business Park to Dover Road
  - (c) the localised widening of Dover Road; and
  - (d) junction improvements at Castle Hill Road

Dover District Council submitted a funding bid to Homes England (HE) through the Marginal Viability Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) and in April 2019, was awarded £16.1m to carry out the required work, subject to Dover District Council's completion of pre-contract conditions which were due to be completed by July 2019. Mr Stiff said that the project was fully funded by the allocation of £16.1m of the HIF funding and therefore would not pose any risk or financial implications to KCC's revenue or capital budgets.

3. The Chairman welcomed Mr Collor (Member for Dover) to respond to the report. Mr Collor commended the BRT project and the new mode of traffic to help improve traffic congestion and air quality in Dover. Mr Collor thanked both KCC and Dover District Council officers for their work and reported that Dover was still on track to execute the pre-contract conditions prior to the allocation of funding from Homes England.
4. RESOLVED that the proposed decision (19/00053) to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste to give:
  - (a) Approval to enter into legal agreements with Dover District Council to undertake the delivery of the Infrastructure Works at no cost or risk to the County Council
  - (b) Approval for KCC officers to project manage, input into the delivery and supervision of the project, with the cost of all staff and consultant time being recoverable against the project funding.
  - (c) Approval to undertake the detailed design and surveys for the project, to include a new bridge crossing the A2, associated approaches to link to

existing/proposed highway, a new link road through the undeveloped White Cliffs Business Park, improvements to the existing Dover Road and links/improvements for the junction onto the existing A258. This work will be undertaken by procuring consultants through an existing framework contract

- (d) Approval to acquire the land and rights for carrying out the construction and maintenance of the BRT project
- (e) Approval to progress all statutory approvals and consents required for the scheme including Section 6 Agreement with Highways England, drainage and environmental consents and detailed planning permission.
- (f) Approval to enter into construction contracts as necessary for the delivery of the scheme subject to the approval of the Infrastructure Commissioning Board to the recommended procurement strategy; and
- (g) Approval for any further decisions required to allow the scheme to proceed through to delivery to be taken by the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment & Transport under the Officer Scheme of Delegations following prior consultation with the Cabinet Member,

be endorsed.

**196. 19/00054 - KCC Country Parks - Decision to approve fees and charges for Pay and Display and Season Ticket charging, and the principles for establishing future fees and charges**

*(Item 13)*

*Stephanie Holt-Castle (Interim Director of Environment, Planning and Enforcement) and Helen Page (Interim Head of Countryside and Community Development) were in attendance for this item.*

1. Mrs Hohler (Deputy Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services) introduced the report that set out the Pay and Display and Annual Parking fees and charges for Kent Country Parks following an annual review. The report sought approval to increase fees and charges for Pay and Display and Annual Season Ticket fees and to delegate authority to the Head of Country Parks to annually review and publish revised fees and charges subject to a number of key principles.
2. Ms Page highlighted to Members the typographical error within the report and confirmed that the key principles referred to in the recommendation were not listed in Appendix A and instead could be found within paragraph 1.9 of the report. Kent Country Parks were a key asset to the Council's portfolio and generated a degree of income that was then invested directly back into the parks and their facilities. A recent review of the charges identified a significant increase in Blue Badge season ticket holders visiting the parks, however, the operational cost of administering the Blue Badges had not increased over the past years. Therefore, the report proposed that the annual price of both season tickets would rise from 1 September 2019 by £2 meaning that the standard ticket would be increased to £52 (costing customer £1 per week to use all nine country parks) and

the Blue Badge season ticket would increase to £5 (£9.62 per week). The £5 figure was set at the cost to make the processing cost of all Blue Badge season ticket applications neutral.

3. Officers responded to Comments and questions as follows:

(a) Ms Page confirmed that it cost the service £7.57 to administer Blue Badge Season Tickets, however, the current charge for this was £3 and had remained at that same cost for the past two years. The proposed increase would ensure that the provision of Blue Badges was not at a cost to other customers who purchased season tickets. The current £3 figure did not provide any contribution to the running-cost of the parks and therefore, the service needed to ensure that future costs of the Blue Badges were not being supplemented due to not charging the appropriate amount.

(b) Mr Lewis proposed that the Blue Badge Season Ticket be amended to £4 instead of £5 in order to make it more equitable. Mr Lewis's proposal was not seconded and fell.

(c) In response to whether future decisions regarding an increase to fees and charges should be delegated to the Head of Country Parks, Mrs Holt-Castle informed Members that the delegation of authority to make minimal increases would reduce the need for further Executive decisions to be made in order to respond to the changing market. The constitution states that where a decision affects two or more electoral divisions, it must be taken as a key decision, however upon discussion with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Regulatory Services, it was agreed that the recommendation should include a clause within it that delegates authority to the Head of Country Parks to annually review and publish revised fees and charges and this would be subject to consultation with the responsible Cabinet Member.

(d) Ms Page said that there was an online payment system to purchase Season tickets, however, a majority of Blue Badge Ticket holders continued to use the contact centre which required more administrative support. The £5 fee still failed to cover the entire cost of the operational fees (£7.57) generated through the application of Blue Badge Season Tickets, however, the view was taken that over a period of time more customers would be able to use the online purchasing system and therefore reduce admin costs.

4. RESOLVED that the proposed decision (19/00054) to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services to increase fees and charges for Pay and Display and Annual Parking Season Ticket fees and to delegate authority to the Head of Country Parks to annually review and publish revised fees and charges, subject to the application of a number of key principles, be endorsed.

Endorsed (14)

Abstained (1)

## **197. Fly Tipping Enforcement Plan**

*(Item 14)*

*David Beaver (Head of Waste Management), Hannah Allard (Waste Business Development Manager) and Natalie Liddiard (Intelligence and Standards Manager) were in attendance for this item.*

1. Mr Whiting (Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste) introduced the report that set out the current and future action plans to address fly tipping in Kent. Mrs Whiting informed the Committee that the Leader had announced at County Council additional funding to help reduce the level of fly tipping in the county through increased enforcement and improved communications between partner agencies with the aim to better inform both householders and businesses of their duty of care and responsibilities relating to waste disposal.
2. Prior to discussion, Mrs Allard informed Members that where the report mentioned VOSA (Vehicle and Operations Service Agency), this should have read DVSA (Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency). Mrs Allard addressed the key areas of the report that looked at the current actions including Op Assist that was carried out in five districts and led to a number of successful prosecutions, future actions to combat fly tipping and the measures that were being developed including social media campaigns, Magistrates training and the use of covert equipment to improve awareness and increase the number of successful prosecutions.
3. The officers and Cabinet Member responded to Comments and questions as follows:
  - (a) Mrs Allard agreed to circulate to Members the number of prosecutions
  - (b) Mrs Liddiard said that Op Assist was piloted within the East of the County, however, following its success, KCC hoped to work with district and borough councils, Kent Police and other partners to deliver more days of action across the rest of the county. KCC used an intelligence led approach to increase the success rate and impact of the 'days of action' and with the £250,000 commitment from KCC, resources could be deployed more effectively within the district and borough councils and by the Police to improve enforcement and reduce fly tipping.
  - (c) Mr Whiting (Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste) informed Members that the Police and Crime Commissioner had doubled the Rural Police Task Force and that Kent Police continued to tackle fly tipping as a priority and work with KCC on Op Assist. Mr Whiting acknowledged that KCC needed to publicise the results of the fly tipping operations and asked officers to cascade the information.
  - (d) The officers agreed to send regular updates to Members of the Council to ensure that the correct information was cascaded to residents.

- (e) Mr Beaver assured Members that the intelligence equipment was used in hotspots and provided targeted intelligence to the Police. A trial of the new covert equipment was due to be carried out across four key sites and use of the technology was advancing successfully.
- (f) Mrs Allard informed Members that new legislation imposed a duty of care on households to check that their waste was being disposed of by an authorised waste carrier. Households were advised to contact the Environment Agency to ensure appropriate checks had been carried out and that a form of receipt be provided by the waste collection service to the Household as proof that all checks had been carried out by the Household to the best of their knowledge to avoid prosecution if that waste was to be incorrectly disposed of.
- (g) The Chairman asked that regular reports be presented to the Committee and thanked officers for their continued efforts in tackling fly tipping.

4. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

### **198. Kent County Council's Response to Transport for the South East's Proposal Consultation** (Item 15)

*Joseph Ratcliffe (Transport Strategy Manager) was in attendance for this item.*

1. Mr Payne introduced the report that outlined Kent County Council's (KCC) proposed response to the consultation by the emerging Sub-national Transport Body (STB) – Transport for the South East (TfSE), on its proposal to government for statutory powers.
2. Supplementary to this, Mr Ratcliffe informed the Committee that the primary purpose of the report was to agree KCCs proposed response supporting the establishment of an STB for the South East with it as a constituent authority within TfSE and support the proposed voting mechanism for the Partnership Board. Mr Ratcliffe referred in particular to the table under paragraph 3.4 of the report that summarised the powers and KCCs response to support or conditionally support each power sought by the TfSE. Mr Ratcliffe noted that the proposal was expected to be submitted by the TfSE to Government in late 2019, with statutory status subsequently being awarded should approval be given by the Secretary of State in 2020. However, after the consultation was launched, the Secretary of State wrote to all emerging STBs indicating that his preference for the foreseeable future was to continue to work with the STBs as voluntary partnerships rather than grant statutory status. Mr Ratcliffe informed Members that as the TfSE was part way through the consultation when the letter was written, it placed them in a good position to move forward if and when the position of the Secretary of State changed. A new approach would be discussed by TfSE's shadow board in September and should the position change, a KCC Leader decision would come back to Committee for formal endorsement which would be the first step in a long process of establishing such a body.

3. The officers responded to Comments and questions as follows:
  - (a) With regards to the status of the STB and whether this would remain as a shadow body until further notice was given by the Secretary of State, Mr Payne said that funding continued to be provided to TfSE by the Secretary of State for further studies which was not the case for other Sub-national bodies around the country and consultations would continue to be had in a manner that recognised the TfSE as a statutory body.
  - (b) Mr Ratcliffe said that the purpose of the consultation was to hear the views of all constituent member authorities and stakeholders and to revise the proposal following the received feedback. The revised proposal would then be presented to the TfSE shadow Board for endorsement. In order for KCC to sign up to the revised proposal, a decision would need to be taken by the Leader of the Council (under article 10(1) and 10(4) of the constitution), providing that there would be no transfer of powers, to endorse the final proposal made by the TfSE to government on the powers and responsibilities relating to the establishment of TfSE following formal consultation. However, should the revised proposal include a transfer of powers, the decision would need to go to full County Council to amend the constitution. Mr Ratcliffe assured Members that a revised final proposal by the TfSE would be brought back to the Cabinet Committee prior to the decision being taken by the Leader.
  - (c) In response to queries regarding the inclusion of the M25 J5, Mr Ratcliffe informed Members that the request for the inclusion of the M25 J5 was featured within the original submission to Highways England (HE) and the Department for Transport (DfT) several years ago when compiling the list of priorities for RIS2. KCC were awaiting confirmation of what the final RIS2 priorities would be, however, KCC were mindful that there were competing demands that needed to be taken into consideration from the Kent Network, the wider South East and the rest of the country. Mr Ratcliffe assured Members that work had been done to support the scheme and welcomed Members the opportunity to discuss matters further outside of the meeting.
  - (d) Mrs Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport) said that stakeholders from around London and the South East used the forum to discuss major priorities and KCC were in a strong position at the table to ensure it was articulating the needs for Kent and applying for bids when possible. Mrs Cooper paid tribute to the offices involved who continued to push for Kent's needs to be prioritised.
  - (e) Mr Ratcliffe informed Members that the A229 work was part of a large local major scheme funding bid and work continued to be undertaken to resolve ongoing concerns.
4. RESOLVED that the proposed response by Kent County Council (KCC) to the consultation by Transport for the South East (TfSE) with proposed support for powers 1 to 9, and conditional support for powers 10 to 15 as set out in the table in section 3.4 and in the conclusions in paragraphs 4.6 to 4.8, be noted.

*(The conditional support is that it is agreed by TfSE that the principle of subsidiarity applies in that decisions on the use of those powers are made at the most immediate (or local) level, i.e. by constituent authorities, e.g. KCC)*

*Mr Love did not participate in the Committees agreement to note the response.*

**199. 19/00055 - Contract for Coroners' Post-Mortem Examinations, North West Kent Coroners Area**

*(Item 16)*

Stephanie Holt-Castle (Interim Director of Environment, Planning and Enforcement) was in attendance for this item.

1. Mrs Hohler (Deputy Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services) introduced the report that set out the proposed future provision of contractual arrangements for mortuary and Post Mortem Examination (PME) services in the Mid Kent and Medway coroner area. Local authorities had a legal obligation to support the work of coroners, to fund all costs of the service and to provide the necessary resources to enable the coroners to carry out their statutory obligations. Kent County Council did not have its own public mortuary and had therefore always commissioned the NHS in Kent and Medway to provide the service. The paper therefore proposed that a four-year contract be awarded to Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust for the provision of post mortem facilities at Tunbridge Wells Hospital in Pembury for the Mid Kent and Medway coroner area.
2. The officer responded to comments and questions as follows:
  - (a) Mrs Holt-Castle assured Members that Kent County Council worked closely with the South East 7 (SE7) to compare the various costs that the NHS Trusts were charging, however, Kent County Council were under legal obligation to meet the costs of the Coroner Service and were required to pay the requested amount by local NHS Trusts. Kent County Council was exploring alternative providers to the NHS which allowed for a public mortuary and digital autopsy, however, PME facilities were currently limited to the NHS as there were no private sectors suppliers that could offer the same highly specialised service. Kent County Council was also due to host an inaugural seminar of the SE7 Coroner Services to review the pressures, both nationally and within the South East.
3. RESOLVED that the proposed decision (19/00055) to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services to award a four-year contract to Maidstone & Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTW) for the provision of post mortem (PM) facilities at Tunbridge Wells Hospital in Pembury, for the Mid Kent & Medway coroner area, be endorsed.

## **200. Serious and Organised Crime**

*(Item 17)*

*Natalie Liddiard (Intelligence and Standards Manager) was in attendance for this item.*

1. Mrs Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport) introduced the report that provided an update on Serious and Organised Crime and paid tribute to Natalie Liddiard and her team who were leading on Kent County Council's response to tackling increased criminal activity. The main categories of serious offences covered by the term 'serious organised crime' were extensive, however, evidence suggested that supplier sectors were potentially of higher risk from criminal exploitation, including waste firms, taxis and domiciliary care. KCC had a responsibility to use its public protection intelligence to best effect to ensure that it was not inadvertently adding risk to its procurement activities and would be coordinating actions across all of KCC, including Children's Young People and Education and Adult Social Care to review how KCC organised itself to avoid exposure to Serious Organised Crime.
2. Mrs Liddiard added that since publication of the Committee paper the national Audit Office had also produced a paper reviewing how Government aimed to tackle Serious and Organised Crime. This reinforced the message that whilst the extent of the problem was not fully known, it was a national issue that needed to be addressed and KCC were in a good position to respond.
3. The officers responded to comments and questions as follows:
  - (a) Mrs Cooper agreed to organise a confidential all Member briefing on Serious and Organised Crime.
  - (b) Mrs Cooper agreed to bring an update report to a future Cabinet Committee in 2020
  - (c) Mrs Cooper assured Members that the work of the Public Protection team would not protract the work of the Select Committee on 'Knife Crime in Kent.'
4. RESOLVED that KCC's approach to Serious and Organised Crime, be endorsed.

## **201. Work Programme**

*(Item 18)*

1. RESOLVED that the Work Programme be noted, subject to the inclusion of the following items:
  - (a) An update on the North West Maidstone Transfer Station (October 2019)
  - (b) Quarterly report on bus feedback portal

- (c) The draft Pitch Allocation and Site Management Policy, the draft Gypsy and Traveller Service Charges and Rent Setting Policy and the draft Unauthorised Encampment Strategy - October 2019
- (d) Transport for South East (TfSE) - October 2019
- (e) Update report on Serious Organised Crime (date TBC)
- (f) Update report on Brexit (date TBC)