

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Kent County Council held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 17 December 2019.

PRESENT:

Mrs A D Allen, MBE (Chairman)
Mr G K Gibbens (Vice-Chairman)

Mr M J Angell, Mr M A C Balfour, Mr P V Barrington-King, Mr P Bartlett, Mrs C Bell, Mrs R Binks, Mr T Bond, Mr A H T Bowles, Mr D L Brazier, Mr J Burden, Miss S J Carey, Mr P B Carter, CBE, Mrs S Chandler, Mr N J D Chard, Mr J Clinch, 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 D Farrell, Mrs L Game, Mr R W Gough, Ms S Hamilton, Mr A R Hills, Mrs S V Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mr P J Homewood, Mr E E C Hotson, Mrs L Hurst, Mr S J G Koowaree, Mr P W A Lake, Mr R L H Long, TD, Mr R C Love, OBE, Mr G Lymer, Mr R A Marsh, Ms D Marsh, Mr P J Messenger, Mr D Murphy, 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, Mr H Rayner, Mr A M Ridgers, Mr C Simkins, Dr L Sullivan, Mr B J Sweetland, Mr I Thomas, Mr R J Thomas, Mr M Whiting, Mr M E Whybrow and Mr J Wright

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs A Beer (Corporate Director of People and Communications), Mr D Cockburn (Corporate Director Strategic & Corporate Services), Ms Z Cooke (Corporate Director of Finance), Mrs B Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport), Mr M Dunkley CBE (Corporate Director for Children Young People and Education), Ms P Southern (Corporate Director, Adult Social Care and Health) and Mr B Watts (General Counsel)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

187. Apologies for Absence

The General Counsel reported apologies from Mrs Beresford, Mr Bird, Mr Booth, Mr Butler, Mr Chittenden, Mr Hill, Mr Hook, Mr Kite, Mr Lewis, Ida Linfield, Mr Manion, Mr McInroy and Miss Rankin.

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

Dr Sullivan declared an interest, as her husband was employed by the County Council in the Early Help and Prevention Team.

189. Minutes of the meetings held on 17 October 2019 and, if in order, to be approved as a correct record

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 17 October 2019 be approved as a correct record.

190. Corporate Parenting Panel - Minutes for noting

(1) The Chairman thanked all Members that had given gifts to the Corporate Parenting Panel giving tree.

(2) The Chairman stated that she had recently visited the charitable organisation 'FareShare' with Caroline Smith and Steve Gray from The Young Lives Foundation. They had been impressed by the food care packages for less fortunate individuals. As a result of the visit, 50 of Kent's care leavers would receive a very substantial package, with lots of Christmas gifts meaning that they would all get something at Christmas. She added that the care leavers would also be offered work experience and potentially apprenticeship work.

(3) The Chairman announced that a concert would take place at 4pm in Sessions House, hosted by The Children in Care Council and invited Members to attend.

(4) RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel on 17 September 2019 be noted.

191. Chairman's Announcements

Mr Richard Carr

(1) The Chairman stated that it was with regret that she had to inform Members of the death of Mr Richard Carr, former Conservative Member for Tenterden from 1981 to 1993.

(2) The Chairman informed Members that Mr Carr's service of thanksgiving had taken place on Thursday 21 November 2019.

(3) Mrs Bell paid tribute to Mr Carr.

Robert Neame, CBE, DL, DCL

(4) The Chairman stated that it was with regret that she had to inform Members of the death of Mr Robert Neame, former Conservative Member for Faversham from 1965 to 1989.

(5) Mr Neame had served as Leader of Kent County Council from 1982 to 1984. He also chaired a number of KCC Committees including the Superannuation Fund Committee, Finance Committee, Policy and Budget Group, Selection Group and served on the Social Services Committee and on Policy and Resources Committee.

(6) Mr Neame became a Deputy Lieutenant in 1992, an Honorary Alderman in 2010 and was a High Sheriff of Kent from 2001 to 2002.

(7) The Chairman informed Members that Mr Neame's service of thanksgiving would take place at 11:30am on 6 February 2020 at Canterbury Cathedral.

(8) Mr Carter, Mr Bowles and Mr Daly paid tribute to Mr Neame.

(9) Following all of the tributes, all Members stood in silence in memory of Mr Carr and Mr Neame.

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

“This Council records the sense of loss it feels on the sad passing of Mr Carr and Mr Neame and extends to their family and friends our heartfelt sympathy to them in their sad bereavements.”

TRANStech Awards

(11) The Chairman announced that Kent County Council’s Public Transport Team had won a national award for its work in providing an electric minibus for disabled and vulnerable people. The team won the inaugural TRANStech Awards Rural Innovation category at the Awards ceremony held on 1 November 2019 at the Royal Lancaster Hotel. The Awards recognised people and organisations designing and using technology to improve transport systems.

(12) The Chairman congratulated Kent County Council’s Public Transport Team on their success.

Petition - 30mph speed limit through Chiddingstone Causeway

(13) The Chairman invited Mr Lake to submit a petition requesting the introduction of a 30mph speed limit through Chiddingstone Causeway.

(14) The Chairman requested that Mr Payne, Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, collect the petition and ensure that it was responded to in accordance with the Petition Scheme.

192. Questions

In accordance with Procedure Rule 1.17(4), 3 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.

193. Report by Leader of the Council (Oral)

(1) The Leader updated the Council on events since the previous meeting, referring specifically to the general election and its implications. He stated that his new administration had been focusing on the Council’s most visible services which helped to shape amenity and the quality of life across Kent

(2) Mr Gough referred to the public engagement which was taking place in relation to Kent’s Strategic Statement and stated that the draft budget for 2020-21 would give added priority to focusing on improving outcomes for Kent’s residents. Mr Gough emphasised the importance of the Strategic Statement and added that whilst many Members had taken part in a workshop to aid its development, further opportunities to shape it would arise in due course.

(3) Mr Gough commended the positive work which had been undertaken in relation to the Energy and Low Emissions Strategy and the strategy's vision to reduce emissions in Kent to zero. He stated that equally important was adaptation and resilience which was being led by the Cabinet Member for the new Environment portfolio.

(4) Mr Gough stated that he would be attending the first meeting of the Thames Estuary Growth Board on 18 December 2020 and would meet with Kate Willard, the newly appointed Estuary Envoy and Chair of the Thames Estuary Growth Board. He added that Kent would continue to lobby government for funding to address economic, housing and infrastructure related issues in Kent, including the Crossrail extension to Ebbsfleet.

(5) Mr Gough referred to the Kent and Medway Enterprise & Productivity Strategy which was a vital document in ensuring balanced growth across Kent and achieving the right relationship with London boroughs.

(6) Mr Gough congratulated the new Kent Members of Parliament and emphasised that he would continue to work very closely with them to present Kent's interests to Government.

(7) Mr Gough referred to the likely departure of the UK from the EU on 31 January 2020. He emphasised the huge amount of work that the County Council had put into preparedness for Brexit and the importance of continuing to be prepared for a range of eventualities post Brexit. He stated that he would write to government to urge at least a review of the Operation Brock barrier between junctions 8 and 9 of the M20. He referred to smart borders in relation to trade, security and migration and the opportunity to ensure that there were benefits for Kent. He added that Kent's relationship with its Continental neighbours would become increasingly important following Brexit.

(8) Mr Gough emphasised the importance of ensuring that Kent's interests were not taken for granted by Government when they were addressing the interests of other parts of the Country. He specifically referred to building upon the vital work relating to the Fair Funding Review, and the significant progress made with Ministers by Mr Carter, former Leader of the Council and Chairman of The County Councils Network.

(9) Mr Gough referred to the 2% Adults Social Care Council Tax precept which was welcomed, but which still left a significant funding gap and national policy change was awaited.

(10) In relation to devolution, Mr Gough stated that there was a need to make sure that Kent's two-tier system worked effectively and he emphasised the importance of delivering the County and District shared agenda.

(11) Mr Gough highlighted the significant work that had been undertaken in relation to addressing areas of concern and responding to the Kent Local Area SEND Written Statement of Action. He emphasised the importance of parental engagement and working closely with schools to ensure a greater focus of inclusion within mainstream education, stronger partnership working with colleagues in Health and the development of a joint commissioning strategy.

(12) Mr Gough welcomed the 1% transfer of funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block, which was supported by the Schools Funding Forum. He added that strong representations would continue to be made to government in relation to SEND funding and that structural change was required in that area as well.

(13) In conclusion, Mr Gough thanked staff for their efforts throughout 2019 and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

(14) Mrs Dean, on behalf of Mr Bird, the Leader of the Opposition, started by welcoming Mr Gough's speech and the collaborative work that he had undertaken as former Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education.

(15) Mrs Dean welcomed the positive work which had been undertaken in relation to the Energy and Low Emissions Strategy. She emphasised the importance of ensuring that new buildings were built in a sustainable way. She also referred to the need for sufficient charging points in Kent for electric vehicles.

(16) Mrs Dean referred to Brexit and the need to be prepared for a range of eventualities.

(17) Mrs Dean emphasised the importance of the Fair Funding Review and ensuring that the right level of funding was allocated to Kent.

(18) Mrs Dean reiterated Mr Gough's comments in relation to the additional funding from government to deliver essential services for local communities, including social care.

(19) Mrs Dean emphasised the importance of structural reform of the planning system and continuing to strengthen relationships between central government, local authorities and residents, referring specifically to differing housing targets.

(20) Mr Farrell, Leader of the Labour Group, started by thanking all of Kent County Council's Members and staff for their hard work, dedication and service to Kent's residents throughout the year.

(21) Mr Farrell emphasised the importance of cross-party lobbying and continuing to ensure that Kent and the financing of local Councils was at the forefront of Ministers' minds. Mr Farrell highlighted the need for planning for the Government to address the issue of long-term funding of adult social care. He also referred to the importance of taking an evidence-based and pragmatic approach in relation to stabilising Kent's agricultural sector.

(22) Mr Whybrow, Leader of the Independents Group, supported Mr Gough's comments in relation to the Energy and Low Emissions Strategy and the strategy's vision to reduce emissions in Kent to zero. He added that the strategy had recently been finalised and a public consultation had been launched. Mr Whybrow expressed his concerns in relation to the climate crisis and emphasised the significant need to tackle climate change.

(23) Mr Whybrow emphasised the importance of nurturing green businesses in Kent with the help of Regional Growth Funds and prioritising public transport, walking and cycling with future LEPs and other capital bids.

(24) Mr Whybrow commended the positive work that had been undertaken by Members and officers in relation to Kent's Pollinator Action Plan.

(25) Mr Whybrow concluded by wishing all of Kent County Council's Members and staff well over the festive period.

(26) In replying to the other Leaders' comments, Mr Gough referred to Mrs Dean's comments in relation to ensuring that new buildings were built in a sustainable way. He confirmed that a report would be submitted to Full Council in May 2020 relating to Kent's Environmental Strategy, which would focus on addressing environmental issues with regards to Kent's new and existing estate.

(27) Mr Gough re-emphasised the importance of Brexit preparedness, focusing on longer-term issues in relation to potential Brexit implications. He expressed the view that a World Trade Organisation (WTO) relationship with the EU after December 2020 was relatively unlikely to happen.

(28) Mr Gough responded to comments made by Mrs Dean and Mr Farrell in relation to fair funding and reiterated the importance of ensuring that Kent's interests were well looked after. He expressed his views in relation to the sustainability of highways expenditure and the importance of maintaining a strong relationship with Ministers in central government. He also emphasised the importance of working closely with Kent's district and borough councils in relation to Kent's infrastructure.

(29) Mr Gough referred to the comments that had been made in relation to social care and commended the cross-party approach taken by government in seeking to address the significant issues within the social care sector across the country.

194. New Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Partnership Arrangements

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

Mrs Chandler moved, and Mr Gough seconded the following motion:

"The County Council is asked to note the establishment of a new safeguarding children multi-agency partnership."

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

(3) RESOLVED that the establishment of a new safeguarding children multi-agency partnership, be noted.

195. Presentation of the Kent Invicta Award to Mr Steve Sherry CMG OBE (Chief Executive of Royal British Legion Industries)

(1) The Chairman welcomed Mr Sherry to the meeting to receive the Kent Invicta Award for 2019. 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 Sherry which included his current position as Chief Executive of Royal British Legion Industries (RBLI) in 2010 after 38 years' service in the Army. Under Mr Sherry's leadership the RBLI was in year 5 of the 10 year plan "Improving Lives Every Day". It was also the RBLI's centenary year and there was a £22m development for the RBLI Village. Her Majesty the Queen had visited RBLI on 6th November 2019, opening a new care home Appleton Lodge and 'cutting the turf' of the new Centenary Village Development with a time capsule buried for future generations.

(2) The Chairman also congratulated Callum Peace, Oakwood Park Grammar School, who had won the competition for Key Stage 4 students across Kent to design and make a new Kent Invicta Award. The award was chosen as the winning design because of the natural materials that had been used, which were found on a local beach and recycled into the award.

(3) The Chairman formally thanked all of the students who had taken part in the competition.

(4) Members of the Council congratulated Mr Sherry on receiving the award and thanked him for his service to the country and the people of Kent.

(5) The Chairman stated that she was delighted that the Group Leaders had agreed unanimously that the Award should be presented to Mr Sherry and it gave her 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, K Sports Football Club for Youths and the Medway and Maidstone Athletics Club.

(6) Mr Gough, Mr Daley and Dr Sullivan congratulated Mr Sherry on his award and his contribution.

(7) In accepting this award, Mr Sherry responded and expressed his thanks to Members.

196. Kent Adult Safeguarding Board Annual Report

(1) Mrs Bell moved and Mrs Cole seconded the following motion:

"That County Council is asked to:

(a) comment on the progress and improvements made during 2018-19, as detailed in the Annual Report from the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board and endorse the 2018-19 Annual Report attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

(2) Ms Deborah Stuart-Angus, Independent Chair of the Kent Safeguarding Adults Board, addressed the meeting and answered a number of questions from Members.

(3) The motion as set out in paragraph (1) was agreed without a formal vote.

(4) RESOLVED that the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board 2018-19 Annual Report attached as Appendix 1 to the report be noted and the comment on the progress and improvements made during 2018-19, as detailed in the Annual Report be noted.

197. Adult Social Care and Health - top tier restructure

(1) Mr Gough moved, and Mrs Bell seconded the following motion:

“The County Council is asked to endorse the recommendation of Personnel Committee to:

- a) delete the current posts of Director of Partnerships and Director of Operations in the Adult Social Care and Health Directorate;
- b) introduce two new Director ASCH roles as described in Appendix 1; and
- c) agree that the two Director roles are organised on a geographical basis with one covering East Kent and the other North and West Kent as shown in the structure chart at Appendix 2.”

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

(3) RESOLVED that;

- a) the current posts of Director of Partnerships and Director of Operations in the Adult Social Care and Health Directorate be deleted
- b) two new Director ASCH roles be established as described in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- c) that the two Director roles be organised on a geographical basis with one covering East Kent and the other North and West Kent as shown in the structure chart at Appendix 2 to the report.

198. Bexley and Kent Urgent Care Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

(1) Mr Bartlett moved, and Mr Pugh seconded the following motion:

“The County Council is asked to:

- (a) approve the establishment of a new Bexley and Kent Urgent Care Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the duration of the review; and
- (b) approve the Terms of Reference.”

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(2) On behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group, Mrs Dean offered to give up their proportionally allocated seat on the Committee to the Labour group. This offer was accepted without any Member indicating that were voting against.

(3) The motion was agreed without a formal vote.

(4) RESOLVED that:

(a) the establishment of a new Bexley and Kent Urgent Care Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the duration of the review, be approved; and

(b) the Terms of Reference, as set out in appendix 1 to the report, with it being noted that the Liberal Democrat Member place on the Committee is reallocated to a Member from the Labour Group, be approved.