

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

MINUTES of a meeting of the Cabinet held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Monday, 14 January 2008.

PRESENT: Mr P B Carter (Chairman), Mr N J D Chard, Mr M C Dance, Mr K A Ferrin, MBE, Mr G K Gibbens, Mr R W Gough, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr K G Lynes and Mr C T Wells

ALSO PRESENT: Mr R A Marsh

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr P Gilroy (Chief Executive), Mr G Badman (Managing Director of Children, Families and Education), Ms A Honey (Managing Director Communities), Mr O Mills (Managing Director - Adult Social Services), Ms M Peachey (Kent Director Of Public Health), Mr A Wood (Head of Financial Management) and Mr A Wilkinson (Managing Director - Environment and Regeneration)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Revenue & Capital Budget Monitoring Exception Report

(Item. 2 - Report by Mr Nick Chard, Cabinet Member for Finance, and Andy Wood, Head of Financial Management)

(1) This report highlighted the main movements since the report to Cabinet in December 2007. There remained significant revenue budget pressures which would need to be managed to insure a balanced revenue position by the year end. The proposed management actions would be closely monitored throughout the remainder of the year to determine progress towards achieving a balanced outturn for the Authority (excluding Asylum).

(2) Mr Chard said that the forecast underspend of some £4.5m on revenue did not include the £4m currently owed for asylum seekers. In respect of the underspend of £92m on capital, 80% of this was contained within 32 projects. The capital programme would happen but was just delayed. However it would be delivered on budget. Mr Carter stressed that we have in place a very ambitious capital programme and that we do deliver good value for money.

(3) Mr Carter advised that progress was being made on the asylum issue and that PricewaterhouseCoopers had been commissioned to do an independent evaluation across several other authorities to assess the fairness of our claim. The evaluation results would be published in 2 to 3 weeks following which Ministerial meetings would take place.

(4) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

2. Update on CSR 07 and the Local Government provisional finance settlement
(Item. 3 - Report by Mr Paul Carter, Leader of the Council, Mr Nick Chard, Cabinet Member for Finance, Mr Peter Gilroy, Chief Executive and Andy Wood, Head of Financial Management)

(1) The report set out the implications of the Local Government provisional finance settlement for the years 2008-2011 which were announced on 6 December 2007. The provisional settlement provided detail behind the headline figures previously announced in the Comprehensive Spending Review in October 2007. The report also contained, as an appendix, a draft response to Government on the Local Government Finance Settlement.

(2) Mr Chard welcomed the 3 year settlement and the extra £9m. However he stressed that there would still be difficult choices to make as it fell significantly short of addressing the funding pressures faced by the County Council. Mr Wood stated that the settlement could change and this would not be known until late January early February which would be after our draft budget proposals were published on 21 January 2008.

(3) RESOLVED that:-

(a) the report be noted; and

(b) a report be submitted to a future meeting on the Green Paper consultation on the system of adult care support to ensure that an affordable scheme is in place for the 21st Century.

3. Monitoring the Outcomes of Select Committee Topic Reviews 2001-2007
(Item. 4 - Report by Mr Paul Carter, Leader of the Council)

(1) In the summer of 2007 a questionnaire had been circulated to all Members of the existing Policy Overview Committees on the effectiveness of these Committees and the outcomes of this questionnaire had been reported to the County Council in October 2007.

(2) In March 2006 the County Council had agreed a formal procedure for Select Committee reports whereby the Select Committee recommendations required an action plan be prepared within three months and this action plan to be made available to the host Policy Overview Committee and for the Select Committee to be reconvened to monitor the recommendations one year after the endorsement of the Select Committee report by Cabinet.

(3) Cabined noted that the Overview and Scrutiny function continues to evolve as does the Topic Review process. They acknowledge that the Select Committee Topic Reviews have added value and made a significant impact and contribution to targets set out in 2010 and a number of the County Council's Policy Framework documents. Select Committees have been achieving successful outcomes since the inception of Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Government.

(4) RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the report be noted and support be given to the ongoing development of the Select Committee Topic Review process which had achieved excellent outcomes for the County Council and the residents of Kent; and
- (b) Policy Overview Co-ordinating Committee be requested to monitor the outcomes of Topic Review reports published prior to the formal adoption of a monitoring process in March 2006 on a systematic basis.

4. Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Children and Young People's Health in Kent

(Item. 5 - Report by Mr Graham Badman, Managing Director for Children, Families and Education; Mr Mark Dance, Cabinet Member for Operations, Resources and Skills CFE and Mr Chris Wells, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Educational Standards, CFE)

(1) The report included a copy of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Children in Kent (JSNK) which had been led by Dr Jonathan Sexton, Assistant Director of Public Health Canterbury/Swale, Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT, supported by a team from both Health and from KCC CFE as part of the developing relationship with Health being fostered through the Health Division within CFE and the KCC Public Health Unit.

(2) Cabinet noted that the JSNA was a useful tool to support the joint planning, commissioning and delivery of services for children and young people in Kent under development through the Kent Children's Trust.

(3) Every Child Matters and the NHS National Service Framework for Children were primarily concerned with standards of care in order that children's services were fit for purpose. This Strategic Needs Assessment would be used to identify issues requiring future investment grounded upon the identification of local issues. It would also identify other change issues necessary to advance improvements in the health and welfare of children and young people. For this reason there were obvious cross links from this Needs Assessment to the Children and Young Person's Plan.

(4) Whilst the prime audience for the Needs Assessment was the multi-agency Kent Children's Trust, wherever possible the data was broken down to district level. Thus emerging Local Children's Trust Arrangements could use the data in the document together with its commentary to highlight local issues reflected in the relative position of each locality to the county as a whole and to make regional and England comparisons. KCC analysts were also developing a report card for each district, which would use the data for focused local use.

(5) There was more work to be done on improving information about child health particularly indicators that showed how we were doing on inequalities in health. This would form part of the work of the Kent Public Health Observatory led by the Director of Public Health.

(6) It was planned that a summary version of a revised JSNA would be produced in Autumn 2008 which showed how it had influenced commissioning and how we were progressing on reducing inequalities in health to influence commissioning in 2009/10.

(7) RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Children and Young People's Health in Kent be noted and used as a tool to support the development of the Kent Children's Trust and the commissioning of locality based services; and
- (b) the report be submitted to both the Children and Families and the Communities Policy Overview Committees.

5. The Outcomes of the Children and Young People of Kent Survey 2006/7 undertaken by the National Foundation for Educational Research

(Item. 6 - Report by Mr Graham Badman, Managing Director for Children, Families and Education; Mr Mark Dance, Cabinet Member for Operations, Resources and Skills CFE and Mr Chris Wells, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Educational Standards, CFE)

(1) The report provided Cabinet with the outcomes of the National Foundation for Education Research Pupil Survey for Kent, attached as an appendix to the report was an Executive Summary of the survey which included age related summaries.

(2) This survey was commissioned to find out what Children and Young People in Kent thought about a range of issues related to the Every Child Matters Outcomes including Being Healthy, Staying Safe, Enjoying and Achieving, Making a Positive Contribution and Achieving Economic Well-being.

(3) It was noted that the information collected through the survey was still being analysed and the data comparisons collated on an individual cluster basis.

(4) RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the report be noted; and
- (b) a further analysis of the Survey data be sought by April 2008 to determine any major policy and budget issues.

6. The Case for Establishing a Credit Union for Kent

(Item. 7 - Report by Mr Keith Ferrin, Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste; Mr Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Supporting Independence and Mr Adam Wilkinson, Managing Director of Environment and Regeneration)

(Mr Gibbens made a declaration of interest as his wife was a founder member of the Canterbury Credit Union)

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION



DECISION TAKEN BY

Cabinet
14 January 2008

DECISION NO.

08/01122

6. The Case for establishing a Credit Union for Kent

(Item 7 – Report by Mr Keith Ferrin, Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste; Mr Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Supporting Independence and Mr Adam Wilkinson, Managing Director of Environment and Regeneration)

(1) The report outlined the following action plan to investigate the potential and develop a proposal to take forward the establishment of a Kent Credit Union.

- (a) a feasibility study be commissioned at approximately £20K to provide full detail including key elements, based on guidance from ABCUL. The key outputs would be:
 - ***an assessment of the options for Common Bonds within Kent with appropriate recommendations***
 - ***an assessment of the Staffing And Resource implications of the proposed options***
 - ***Financial Projections drawn up, based on the above, that can be used as a basis for aiding the decision-making for credit union development in the area***
 - ***production of a written report which will assist any subsequent development of a Regulatory Business Plan needed for authorisation by the FSA.***
- (b) following the feasibility stage, production of a full regulatory business plan would require appointment of key, experienced staff to drive the process, therefore the appointment of a Credit Union Development Manager would be expected to cost approximately £50K for one year;
- (c) support staff and operation budget to fund to full business planning completion would be estimated at £30K. This would be expected to include recruitment costs, professional/regulatory fees, advertising and promotion and initial volunteer and staff training costs;
- (d) this level of finance would provide only initial feasibility and business planning and the full costs to set up a Credit Union for Kent were expected to be in the region of £500K consideration would need to be given as part of feasibility and planning to how these funds would be raised to ensure the Credit Union would have sufficient initial capital to ensure future sustainability; and

(2) After detailed discussions Cabinet RESOLVED that £100K for a full feasibility study to be commissioned, under the guidance of the Cabinet Members Steering Group, and to allow development of a complete and full business plan for the establishment of a Credit Union for Kent via the appointment of a Credit Union Development Manager and supporting staff for one year.

Background Documents:

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Decision Referred to Cabinet Scrutiny			
YES		NO	

Cabinet Scrutiny Decision to Refer Back for Reconsideration			
YES		NO	

Reconsideration Record Sheet Issued			
YES		NO	

Reconsideration of Decision Published
DD/MM/YY

7. Commission for Social Care Inspection - Annual Performance Review Report for Adult Social Care

(Item. 8) - Report by Mr Kevin Lynes, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Services and Mr Oliver Mills, Managing Director, Kent Adult Social Services)

(1) The report included the Performance Review Report for Adult Social Care and outlined the Commission for Social Care Inspection's view of the Adult Social Services Directorate's performance over the past year.

(2) The outcome of the performance assessment for 2006/7 was announced on 27 November 2007 and resulted in KCC retaining its 3-star rating for the sixth year for Adult Social Services.

(3) Cabinet noted that 2007/08 was likely to be the last year in which a star rating would be given for Adult Social Services as a new performance regime was expected in 2009 which would include a Joint Assessment Framework with Health and that a Joint Commission for Health and Social Care was expected to be established in 2009.

(4) RESOLVED that:-

(a) the report be noted; and

(b) Cabinet's thanks be passed to all staff involved within the Adult Social Services and Communities Directorates.

8. Kent/Swindon Partnership

(Item. 9 - Report by Mr Keith Ferrin, Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste and Mr Oliver Mills, Managing Director, Kent Adult Social Services)

(1) In October 2004 Swindon Borough Council (SBC) and Kent County Council entered in to an improvement partnership. The purpose of the partnership was to improve the Swindon Social Services performance within a period of up to three years with a headline measure of improved performance agreed at a move from zero to two stars as assessed by the Commission for Social Care Inspection – Ofsted for Children's Social Services from 2005/2006. At the end of the partnership in November 2007 SBC's performance on Adult Social Services was assessed as two stars while all services for Children and Young People, including Education, under the Ofsted APA Framework were assessed as 2 overall, equivalent to one star under the previous CSCI star rating process.

(2) The Kent/Swindon partnership has been successful, both in achieving sustainable improvement by Swindon Council and in demonstrating the local Government franchising model can work through the family of local Government working together rather than interventions by external consultancies, which had been costly and failed over a long period. The partnership has been genuinely unique in its range and ambition. It has taken great commitment and resilience from Members, senior managers, frontline and support staff from both organisations during a period of major change for local Government. Its partnership has produced a rich source of evidence to guide future capacity building initiatives, which should be taken up by Government, academics and public agencies.

(3) In the end the partnership is about people – the people of Swindon and Kent have benefited from the commitment and skill of all those in Kent and Swindon who have made the partnership a success.

(4) RESOLVED that:-

(a) the report be noted; and

(b) Mr K Ferrin prepare an article for submission to the Local Government Chronicle setting out Kent's journey with Swindon Borough Council.

9. Audit Commission Inspection of the Kent Supporting People Programme

(Item. 10 - Report by Mr Kevin Lynes, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Services and Mr Oliver Mills, Managing Director, Kent Adult Social Services)

(1) The Audit Commission undertook a full inspection of the Kent Supporting People Programme in September 2007. Their report was published on 29 November 2007 and judged the service to be "good with promising prospects for improvement". Kent County Council will be responding by 29 January 2008.

(2) A special meeting of the Core Strategy Development Group is proposed in January to help to construct the response. The invitation to this meeting will also be open to any members of the Commissioning Body who would like to attend. This will be signed off by Kevin Lynes in his dual role as Cabinet Member for KASS, and Chair of the Commissioning Body. It will then be reported to the next meetings of the Commissioning Body and the Adult Social Services Policy Overview Committee (ASSPOC).

(3) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

10. Cabinet Scrutiny and Policy Overview

(Item. 11 - Report by Mr Peter Gilroy, Chief Executive)

(1) The report summarised the outcomes and progress on matters arising from the meeting of Cabinet Scrutiny on 12 December 2007 and set out progress on the current programme for Select Committee Topic Reviews.

(2) Mr Ferrin advised that SE Trains had not responded to our request for the inclusion of rail travel within the Freedom Pass Scheme and it had been

decided to wait until the extension of the scheme countywide was completed before a further approach was made to SE Trains. Mr Badman confirmed that foster carers do receive allowances to cover costs, if required, for the £50 Freedom Pass.

(3) RESOLVED that the report be noted.