KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

GROWTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITIES CABINET COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Growth Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 17 May 2016.

PRESENT: Mr M A Wickham (Chairman), Mr S Holden (Vice-Chairman), Mr M Baldock, Mr D L Brazier, Miss S J Carey, Mr B E Clark, Mrs M E Crabtree (Substitute for Mr A H T Bowles), Mr G Lymer, Mr F McKenna, Mrs E D Rowbotham, Mr C Simkins, Mr B J Sweetland (Substitute for Mr J A Kite, MBE) and Mr R Truelove

ALSO PRESENT: Mr M C Dance and Mr P M Hill, OBE

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr D Smith (Director of Economic Development), Mr R Gill (Economic Policy and Strategy Manager), Mr R Fitzgerald (Performance Manager), Mrs K Stewart (Director of Environment Planning and Enforcement), Mr S Rock (Head of Trading Standards), Ms S Dunn (Head of Skills and Employability), Mr D Hughes (Head of Business Engagement and Economic Development), Ms K Eslea (Head of Learning, Turner Contemporary) and Ms C A Singh (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

152. Apologies and Substitutes
(Item A2)

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Kite, Mr Sweetland attended as substitute and Mr Bowles, Mrs Crabtree attended as substitute.

153. Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda
(Item A3)

Mr Sweetland and Mr Dance made a declaration of interest on Item C3 as they were Directors of Locate in Kent.

Mr Brazier made a declaration on item A6 as he is an ambassador for Turner Contemporary.

154. Minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2016
(Item A4)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2016 were correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

155. Verbal updates by Cabinet Members
(Item A5)

1. The Cabinet Member for Economic Development Services, Mr Dance and the Cabinet Member for Communities, Mr Hill, gave their verbal updates on issues that had taken place since the last meeting of this Cabinet Committee.

2. Mr Dance spoke on the following:

- The Regional Growth Fund – The March invoices have been despatched to the recipients of the fund and repayment was awaited. The scheme would be review in June and at the same time an assessment would be made of the banks position.
- Mr Dance attended Living Land at the Kent show ground - This scheme was aimed at Primary school children to give them an insight to the rural sector including its jobs and where food comes from.
- He also attended 2020 Vision Live – This event had increase in popularity year on year with over 300 companies taking part. At the event business representatives enjoyed a wide range of inspirational speakers on various topics and were able to network.
- Mr Dance advised that the 2020 Start Up would be held in October 2016 – This was aimed at Entrepreneurs.
- Ebbsfleet Garden City – There was a visit from Brandon Lewis, MP, Housing Minster, and Lord Heseltine who were happy with the progress. There would be seven to eight major developers building by spring next year 1200k per year on going. Mr Dance advised that there was a real drive to develop high quality commercial property around Ebbsfleet Station with a project to erect a multi-storey carpark quarter.

3. Mr Hill advised that Sandgate Library would be run by the Parish Council on KCC's behalf. The hand over took place in April 2016.

4. Mr Hill advised that the final of the Kent School Games would be held on 30 June at the University of Kent, Canterbury. Members of the County Council would receive an invitation to the event nearer the time via email.

5. The Kent cultural celebration event would be held on 18 September 2016 and Members would receive an invitation to the event.

6. In response to a question by a Member Mr Dance confirmed that the necessary infrastructure would be put in place to accommodate the extra housing at Ebbsfleet. He advised that a subgroup had been set up to deal with this specific issue.

7. RESOLVED that the information given in the verbal updates be noted with thanks.

156. PRESENTATION
(Item A6)

1. The Cabinet Member for Community Services, Mr Hill and the Head of Learning and Visitor Experience, Turner Contemporary, Ms Karen Eslea, were invited by the Chairman to give their presentation.

2. Mr Hill referred to the “Rough Guide” handout on Margate, that had been tabled, that had appeared on the website headed “How Margate got cool”. He introduced Ms Eslea to Members and then gave a presentation using overheads on the vision and inception of the Turner Contemporary which opened in April 2011 to the present day.

3. Ms Eslea set out the galleries achievements in the five years that it had been open. The gallery did not have a permanent collection but had forged partnerships that allowed it to change the exhibits every three or four months. Before the gallery opened work had been undertaken to gain an audience. There had been world class exhibits by artists including works by Joseph Turner, Leonardo Da Vinci, Grayson Perry and Tracey Emin. The Gallery had the honour of welcoming visits by Her Majesty the Queen in 2011 and HRH the Duchess of Cambridge in 2015. The Gallery had been chosen as the venue in April to launch the new £20 note which would feature JMW Turner by the governor of the Bank of England, Mark Carney with director of Turner Contemporary, Victoria Pomery and artist Tracey Emin.

4. Ms Eslea then explained the economic impact that Turner Contemporary had on Margate. There had been to date 1.9 million visits to the gallery and it was predicted that this number would rise to 2 million by June 2016. Members noted that 40% of the visits to Margate came to the gallery. Since Turner Contemporary was opened 72 new businesses had started in Margate. House prices had risen to an average of £204k. Southeastern Trains had advised that over the past three years passenger numbers to Margate had risen by 100k from 220k to 329k.

5. Ms Eslea commented on the social impact advising of the learning programmes that were renowned across the world. Ms Eslea had visited China, Japan and Oslo giving advice on the learning programmes.

6. Members noted the work undertaken on a Schools Programme, an intergenerational programme that looked at inspiring 4 to 10 year olds to become the new leaders for the future by transforming neglected sites in Margate. Parents were also included through their support of their children. A City and Guilds Course was being developed with Canterbury Christ Church University for Parents. There were plans for this work to be shared with the House of Lords.

7. Ms Eslea concluded that Turner Contemporary also had a social return that included civic pride and an inspirational and spiritual space.

8. Mr Hill thanked Ms Eslea for all the work she had undertaken in the five years that she had been in post.

9. Mr Hill concluded that he considered the Gallery an outstanding success and that it had and was making an impact on the future of Margate and was money well spent by all the partners.

10. Mr Hill and Ms Eslea responded to questions by Members as follows:

a) Members thanked Mr Hill and Ms Eslea for their presentation and considered it a great cultural investment.

b) It was suggested that there was a need to show how Turner Contemporary had moved areas of Margate out of deprivation. Mr Hill advised that it would take time and Turner Contemporary could not achieve this on its own. He suggested that with more visitors more money was spent in the town. He was confident that new businesses coming into the area would provide results.

c) A suggestion was made that the increase in house prices would not improve the level of deprivation in Cliftonville and would not help local people but would provide for those people coming into the area. Mr Hill said that house prices were an indication that things were improving in an area. Mr Dance agreed that there had been a lot of bad housing in the area that had mostly gone through failing fire standards. Many of those houses went to auction and KCC had bought and refurbished them and rented them.

d) Ms Eslea explained that she did visit other galleries and although Turner Contemporary was developed through a sense of place, it was ambitious. The gallery was part of the Plus Tate Network, 35 galleries across the country that shared works. Turner Contemporary was a leader in that network.

e) Ms Eslea advised that the artist Tracey Emin was passionate about Turner Contemporary. She had contributed to the gallery both financially and gave her time to speak to local children as part of the Learning programme on changing aspirations.

f) Mr Dance agreed that the private rental sector in Margate had dropped. He advised that the bad housing in the area was being addressed. This included the local authority buying those rundown properties through auction and refurbishing them and then renting them; and through the scheme "No Use Empty" which had turned around four and a half thousand houses in the area of Margate. People who wanted to rent were looking for better housing.

g) Ms Eslea advised that there was a mixture of both contemporary and historical art shown at the gallery. Members noted that the investment research being undertaken with Christchurch, Canterbury would be launched in the Autumn.

h) A comment was made that originally local people were generally against the development of an art gallery in Margate but their opinions had now changed with a high level of local people enjoying the gallery regularly. The area also enjoyed a great deal of employment generated from visitors.

i) A suggestion was made that the social aspect brought to the area through the Turner Contemporary gallery needed to be kept on the radar.

j) Mr Baldock agreed to follow up on his question regarding housing in Margate outside the meeting.

11. RESOLVED that the responses to comments and questions by Members and the information given in the presentation be noted with thanks.

157. Trading Standards - Business Charging Policy
(Item B1)

1. The Cabinet Member for Community Services, Mr Hill, introduced a report that outlined the opportunity to generate income for the provision of non-statutory advice

to businesses by the Trading Standards Service and sought endorsement of the proposed decision he was due to take to implement the scheme.

2. The Director of Environment Planning and Enforcement, Mrs Stewart, advised that the Trading Standards Service was a vital part of public protection group of services within the Growth and Environment and Transport Directorate. Trading standards did not only enforce but were increasingly providing a preventative model of consumer protection and supported KCC's outcomes around a safer environment, particularly for the Kent community. The proposal for the introduction for charging for advice would further develop a fairer and sustainable service.

3. The Head of Trading Services, Mr Rock, highlighted that the reasons for the Policy for charging to be changed was to create a level playing field and fairer charging policy between those companies that chose to enter into a Primary Authority relationship that where charged for advice and those companies that did not enter into a relationship with Trading Standards that received advice for free.

4. Mrs Stewart and Mr Rock responded to questions as follows:

a) Mr Rock advised that the Primary Authority for the last financial year was around £15k. The business advice provided based on last year would be £35k, if option 3 was agreed that figure would drop to £14k on the basis of providing an hours free advice to businesses over the lifetime of the business to help them develop and grow. Compliance advice provided last year totalled 700 hours; part of which would have been more than just compliance and would include advice to develop that business, whereas now there would be a clear line drawn between dealing with compliance and advice that would be charged thereafter. This would amount to approximately £30k this year.
b) Mr Rock agreed that those figures would be reflected in future reports to the Cabinet Committee.
c) Mr Rock advised that Trading Standards conducted a survey in July of 2015 businesses of all sizes. 50% of those businesses were willing to pay for business advice. The rate surveyed was lower than £70 per hour, at £35 per hour. He reminded Members that the first hour of advice was free but there was also the option for signposting free advice to good online facilities including Business Companion. One Trading Standards Officers post could be covered for £50k. The money received from the cost recovery of business advice would be returned to the service to ensure they could continue to provide support to other parts of the service including protecting the most vulnerable.
d) A comment was made that the website page for Trading Standards was clear and good for businesses
e) A request was made for the geographic split of where the services were being used to be included in future progress reports to this Cabinet Committee so that consideration could be given to where resources should be focused.
f) Mr Rock clarified that there were 5.6 FTEs officers working in Business Advice Services Team with 30 staff overall that could provide additional support to the team.

5. RESOLVED that:-

(a) the responses to comments and questions by Members be noted; and

(b) the Cabinet Committee endorsed the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Community Services on the proposed decision to:

i. agree the introduction of a charging policy for the provision of advice to businesses by the Trading Standards team.

ii. agree a charging policy in line with option 3; the first hour free for tailored advice to a maximum of one hour (for the lifetime of the business) and £70 per hour thereafter.

iii. agree that the service will provide fully chargeable advice to businesses located outside of the County of Kent

iv. Further explore opportunities to work collaboratively with other authorities and to delegate the decision to undertake such arrangements where appropriate to the Head of Trading Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community Services

158. Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission
(Item C1)

1. The Economic Strategy and Policy Manager, Mr Gill, introduced a report that sets out the role of the Commission and introduced the initial views expressed by Kent County Council. He highlighted the following:

- The Commission was at an early stage and the Terms of Reference had not been settled.
- The aim of the Commission was to have a 30 year view of planning and economic development.
- The Commission's membership would include the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and the Minster for the Thames Gateway, a number of prominent experts in planning and development. A full list would be forwarded to Members when available.
- The Leader asked for the County Council's views to be sent in early. The County Council response focus included (i) solutions to the infrastructure funding gap identified in the Growth and Infrastructure Framework; and (ii) emphasised the wider infrastructure investment required for projects such as the Lower Thames Crossing and the impact on the A2, Dover.

2. Mr Gill responded to questions by Members as follows:

a) Mr Truelove made the following points:
- This was a significant report that required Kent wide political input.
- KCC Members views were not sort before the response was produced and submitted.
- The bullet points made in the report and considered that the infrastructure deficit was crucial.
- Economic polarization was critical.

- This was an excellent response and KCC needed to continue to influence what happened in the future.
  Mr Dance thanked Mr Truelove for his comments and advised that this was the opening stage and Members were being asked for their ideas.

b) Mr Baldock raised the following points regarding the accuracy of the report:
   - Referring to paragraph 1.1 - Need to ensure that there is no confusion between Thames Gateway and Thames Estuary in the text.
   - Referring to paragraph 1.3 – The areas covered were wider than previously consider
   - Referring to paragraph 2.2 – This bullet point was welcomed. Referring to page 37 – He considered that the Science Park was not as prominent as it was six months ago due to the change of ownership. The potential for housing at Rushenden should read "1200". He accepted that the figures were continually adjusted.
   - Referring to page 41 – The A2 was indicated to be outside the boundary He considered that for consistency this should read "that it should be inside the boundary of focus". With regard to the second bullet point he had concerns that KCC was perpetuating that journey times were greatly improved for much of North Kent. He considered that this was not true for those living outside the main station. Those that were off the High Speed 1 North coast were having extended journey times. This needed to be reflected.
   - Referring to page 47, paragraph 2.2.3 – This was hugely important as Lower Thames Crossing is indicated to go to the A2/M2 with no guaranteed progress of the traffic from the A2/M2 corridor onto the M20/A20 corridor.
   - Referring to page 51, paragraph 2.3.15 – He considered that if the full potential of the new project, KCC needed to look at the whole of North Kent. He suggested that Swale Borough Council's Local Plan reflected the next 20 years incorporating the opportunities for investment in Brenley Corner on the A2.

c) Mr Sweetland made the following points:
   - Referring to page 46, paragraph 2.2.1, he questioned and sought clarification on the wording *"the Government's strongly supports for a Lower Thames Crossing to the east of Gravesend",* saying that he understood that the government had not made a decision.
   - Mr Gill advised that the way the wording was phrase in the report was short hand for the fact that that was the only option the government consulted on rather than any formal decision on the consultation being made yet by the government.
   - Mr Sweetland stressed that he considered that the author of the report was wrong to word the report in this manner.
   - Mr Gill reiterated that this was not his decision but rested with the Leader of the County Council and others. He considered that the report aimed to set out information on housing numbers etc, but agreed that there was information within the report that was inaccurate as highlighted by Mr Baldock. The aim was to set out a broad pitch for KCC's requirements of the Growth Commission as it starts work.

- Mr Sweetland formally asked that the Minutes reflected that information in the report was factually incorrect.
- Mr Clark commented on his surprise that the links to Maidstone were not a core part of the report, especially regarding Bluebell hill, A229 and Sittingbourne Road, A249. He considered that there would be a migration of people to and from Maidstone. With economic growth going west to east he found it astounding that Maidstone was not mentioned Mr Gill advised that there was no boundary.
- Mr Gill explained that Mr Clark's comments reflected the big challenges in the Strategic Planning Zones. KCC had set out what this meant for the area set out by the Commission for Kent, but it was difficult to where you draw the boundary when focusing on the area that the Commission is focusing on. Mr Clark made a request that this be considered in future discussions.
- Mr Brazier spoke for the small local communities that were concerned that there would be pressures on their rural areas for leisure etc and housing. He was concerned that there was no acknowledgement of the concept of the Thames Gateway. This needed to be planned for.

3. RESOLVED that:-

(a) the comment and responses to questions by Members are noted; and

(b) subject to the corrections highlighted by Members being made the initial response to the Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission be noted.

159. Skills Commission: Progress report and the potential for devolution
(Item C2)

1. The Economic Strategy and Policy Manager, Mr Gill, and the Head of Skills and Employability, Ms Dunn introduced a report that was requested on a regular basis to provide an overview of progress since the Kent and Medway Skills Commission was established. Mr Gill advised that the report was in two parts (i) an update on how the targets were met and (ii) a reflection on thoughts for devolution in relation to skills. Ms Dunn advised that there were seven sector Guilds set up. A briefing on; what the Guilds had achieved to date and a series of actions, would be held on 28 June 2016.

2. Ms Dunn advised that Guilds for the Financial and Public Service sector were being considered and would be taken to the KMEP for endorsement in the near future.

3. RESOLVED that KCC's response to the Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission be noted.

160. Locate in Kent Contract Performance Review
(Item C3)

1. The Cabinet Committee considered a report introduced by the Head of Business and Enterprise, Mr Hughes, that provided a review of the performance of

the inward investment services contract with Locate in Kent for the period April 2014 to March 2016.

2. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

161. Work Programme 2016
(Item C4)

1. The Democratic Services Officer invited Members to suggest any additional topics to be considered at future meetings to the work programme.

2. Members of the Cabinet Committee suggested the following topics:

- Trading Standards – 6 monthly update
- Otterpool Garden City
- Thames Estuary Commission

3. The Chairman sought Members views regarding a trip to be arranged in June to regeneration sites in Margate. A Member commented that setting up visits was costly and were often not well attended. Members agreed to visit Margate in their own time and asked for the visit to be removed from the work programme.

4. RESOLVED that the work programme be agreed, subject to the suggestions by Members, listed above being added to the work programme for consideration.

162. Performance Dashboard
(Item D1)

1. The Business intelligence Manager - Performance, Mr Fitzgerald, introduced the end of year Performance Dashboard report that provided the progress on performance against targets for the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) included in this year's Directorate Business Plans. He highlighted that generally this was a good picture with only one indicator that was off target that had previously been discussed by Members. He advised that "No Use Empty had more than achieved its target and made a strong contribution to the increase of available housing stock. He referred to the red indictor which was "On line contact to the service" that despite it being a long way off where it should be at the beginning of the year there had been improvement each quarter. He concluded by referring to the "Sports Income" on page 89 advising that he had March data available which showed that it had not reached its target but was very close.

2. Mr Fitzgerald responded to questions by Members as follows:

a) Mr Hill agreed to answer Mr Truelove's questions regarding where the Sports funding came from, in particular football, outside the meeting.
b) Mr Clark considered that there should be robust targets for the Libraries Service for next year. Mr Fitzgerald advised that the targets had been reviewed carefully in the business plan process and the indicator that appeared red would be a tracked indicator as it was expected to follow the trend of the visits and how this can measure to move towards the new service specification.

c) A comment was made that there was a need to understand how people are using libraries with the decline in people visiting the libraries. Mr Hill advised that this was a national picture that the use of the library was in decline and there was a need to look for additional use of the building and make it a better community asset.

3. RESOLVED that the responses to questions by Members and the report be noted.

163. Redesign of the Mobile Library Service
(Item E1)

1. The Cabinet Member, Mr Hill, advised that this was an information report to advise that a decision on the "Redesign of the Mobile Library Service" was taken outside the cycle of meetings. As a result the procedures set out in the Constitution were followed and no objections were received to the decision being taken. The decision was taken and implemented saving time and £12,500.

2. RESOLVED that the Cabinet Committee noted that the decision regarding the Redesign of the Mobile Library Services had been taken in accordance with the process set out in Appendix 4 Part 6 of the Councils Constitution to progress and implement the Redesign of the Mobile Library Service.